

truths which they deem essential and necessary, who can object seriously?

That, mark you, was the position of the hon. gentleman when he hoped this question would be drawn from the federal arena. Well, now, I shall give him a finding of fact, and a finding in law from a tribunal that ought at least to command his attention, if not his respect. I find, by the judgment of the last case of the Privy Council of England—the Brophy case—Lord Herschell, speaking for his colleagues, used the following language:—

Contrast the position of the Roman Catholics prior to and subsequent to the Act from which they appeal. \* \* \*

In view of this comparison it does not seem possible to say that the rights and privileges of the Roman Catholic minority in relation to education which existed prior to 1890 have not been affected. \* \* \*

As a matter of fact, the objection of Roman Catholics to schools such as alone receive state aid under the Act of 1890 is conscientious and deeply rooted. \* \* \* It is notorious that there were acute differences of opinion between Catholics and Protestants on the education question prior to 1870. This is recognized and emphasized in almost every line of these enactments. There is no doubt either what the points of difference were, and it is in the light of these that the 22nd section of the Manitoba Act of 1870, which was in truth a parliamentary compact, must be read.

Well, if this is not sufficient, if the decision of the Privy Council on the very points that disturb the hon. gentleman, if the opinion of the hon. member from Winnipeg (Mr. Martin), who was one of the very men who was responsible for this troublesome legislation in Manitoba, be not sufficient, what will satisfy him? What tribunal can we appeal to that will satisfy the people of this country at large as to the exact position of affairs? Was I altogether counting without my host in expecting the hon. leader of the Opposition to rally to the support of the Government after these utterances? Let us see, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman inaugurated a tear in his native province, which is a Catholic province. He went to speak to the Catholic electorate 'par excellence' of the Dominion of Canada. In the month of August, only a month after Parliament had risen and after he had made these statements as to what he hoped would be done by the legislature of Manitoba, and as to what would happen should they not do it, he went to Grand River, in the county of Gaspé. And I hold in my hand a statutory declaration, made under the Act by a gentleman who heard the hon. gentleman then explain to the people of Grand River what his views were. I have sent to my hon. friend a copy of this declaration. I propose to read it to the House:

Canada,  
Province of Quebec,  
County and District of Gaspé.

We the undersigned citizens and parliamentary electors residing in the county of Gaspé above mentioned, solemnly declare as follows:—

That we were present at a meeting of the Gaspésian electorate held in Grand River on the 24th day of August, 1895, whereat the Hon. W. Laurier, M.P., delivered a speech on the political topics of the day.

That this meeting was attended by four or five hundred persons, of whom fully ninety per cent were Roman Catholics; amongst whom were a large number of Roman Catholic priests then visiting Grand River.

That in his address, the Hon. Mr. Laurier gave out amongst other reasons why his hearers should not have confidence in the then Government of Canada, the fact that they would never submit to Parliament a Bill to redress the grievances of the Manitoba Catholic minority.

That the Hon. Mr. Laurier, to justify his suggestion of an inquiry into the facts connected with the Manitoba school difficulty, stated that he personally felt no need therefor, being already convinced of the righteousness and justice of the Catholic minority's demands; but that an investigation of the kind suggested might cause others, not then convinced, to see in the Manitoba school laws of 1890 and amendments thereto, the injustice perpetrated to the detriment of the Catholic minority in that province.

That after the delivery of the Hon. Mr. Laurier's speech, an elector, Dr. Ennis, then begged leave to ask Mr. Laurier for further explanations about the position which the hon. leader of the Liberal party of Canada proposed to take with reference to this school embroglio when it would be brought up before Parliament, and that on being invited to put his question from the platform the elector asked: "Would the Hon. Mr. Laurier, as Prime Minister of Canada, be willing to assume the responsibility of submitting to Parliament for its approval, with the assent and support of his followers, a Bill to remedy the grievances of the Catholic population of Manitoba, or would the Hon. Mr. Laurier, as leader of the Liberal party in Opposition, give the Government of Sir Mackenzie Bowell fair and loyal support in their endeavours to do justice to the demands of the Catholic minority in Manitoba, by voting for such remedial legislation?"

That in reply to this question the Hon. Mr. Laurier said that he would try and see such measures adopted by Parliament in the event of his being called upon to redress the grievances mentioned, as leader of a Government in Canada, and that he would vote for such a remedial law if submitted by Sir Mackenzie Bowell's Government.

That this declaration of the Hon. Mr. Laurier met with the hearty approval of his hearers.

And we make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and having the same force and effect as if made under oath, under the authority of the Canada Evidence Act of 1892.

JOHN CARBERY, Mayor of Grand River.  
ANDREW BAKER, ex-Mayor Cape Cove.  
JAMES JONES, ex-Mayor Patos.  
L. PHILIP BEAUDIEN, Merchant.  
SIMON METHOT,  
FRS. GIBAUT, Agent.

Declared before me at Grand River, Gaspé county, this second day of March, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six.

JOSEPHAT BELINEAU, J.P.

So that evidently, Mr. Speaker, and I read it for the purpose of showing that—I had some reason to expect, in 1895, from