

MR. MCCARTHY'S BILL.

What Mr. Devlin Says on the Subject.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA, March 20.—Mr. McCarthy, in moving that his bill entitled an act further to amend the act respecting the Northwest Territories be read a first time, made a brief speech which aroused a warm rejoinder from Mr. Devlin, the member for Ottawa County. The bill, Mr. McCarthy explained, was the same as the one he had introduced last session. It proposed to give to the Northwest Territories the power to deal with the subject of education untrammelled and uncontrolled, also to repeal the remainder of the clause in the act known as the dual language clause, which was left in the act by the compromise which was arranged after the discussion in this house in 1891. It would be recalled, he said, that at that time power was given to the Northwest Assembly to repeal a portion of the clause, but the remainder was still left beyond their authority. The act had provided previous to that time that either the English or French language might be used in the debates of the Legislative Assembly and in the debates before the courts, and that both languages shall be used in the publication of the proceedings of the Assembly and in the publication of laws. The compromise was in the form of a proviso:—"That after the next general election of the Legislature such Assembly may by ordinance or otherwise regulate its proceedings and the manner of recording and publishing the same." The power given to the Legislative Assembly was thus, he said, merely to govern its own proceedings, and the law was left otherwise as it was. His bill would also give the Assembly the power to decide whether the dual languages should be continued in the courts and in the publication of the laws.

Continuing, he said:—"As I have said often before in making this motion, or in bringing in a bill to repeal this clause, I do not do it from any feeling of hostility to my French-Canadian fellow-subjects. I believe, sir, that the interests of this country will be best served when the distinction between these nationalities is done away with, at all events so far as the Northwest is concerned we certainly should not introduce a measure which is calculated and apparently designed to perpetuate that race distinction which unhappily exists in one of the older Provinces.

Mr. Devlin—Which one?

Mr. McCarthy—In the Province of Quebec. If the hon. gentleman wants to know we have no difficulty in answering that question.

Mr. Devlin—We will tell you about the other bye-and-bye.

Mr. McCarthy—With regard to the subject of education, I think that the House and the country must be satisfied just now that an attempt to interfere with a Province in the Northwest or the Territories in the Northwest on the subject of education is calculated to cause a great deal of trouble. We have had the Manitoba school question up by reason of an attempt that was made in the constitution of Manitoba to fetter or control that Province on the subject of education, and recently I think the Government have found some little difficulty in dealing with a cognate question which came from the Northwest Territories. The sooner we realize that the people of Manitoba as well as the people of the Northwest are perfectly competent to manage their educational affairs themselves without any control from this Parliament the better it will be for the peace and welfare of the country. I therefore have pleasure in introducing to the House a bill which will take away that limitation which the act intends to impose, which the act does impose, with regard to educa-

tion, and which will remove the last vestige of the dual language clause so far as the Northwest is concerned.

MR. DEVLIN REPLIES.

When the Speaker put the motion of Mr. McCarthy for the first reading of the bill Mr. Tarte called out "Division," but Mr. Devlin, rising, addressed the House in reply to the member for North Simcoe. He said: Mr. Speaker, I certainly did not expect to speak upon this question at the present time, but I wish to answer one statement which was made by the hon. gentleman who had just resumed his seat (Mr. McCarthy). He says that the Province of Quebec is responsible for the hard feeling that to-day exists in the Dominion of Canada, and I answer by saying: He is the one. He is the one who is responsible for the hard feeling that exists in the Dominion of Canada. We have had that hon. gentleman here year after year since 1887, with what? With a project of law, the intension of which is to close the Northwest Territories and the Province of Manitoba against the Catholics of the Province of Quebec, a project of law which tells them that if they wish to go to that Province or to those Territories they must remember that there—if his views can be carried out—their language will be proscribed and their rights will be trampled upon. Why, Mr. Speaker, it was only last night that we heard another effusion on this same subject. I do not see the Controller of Customs in his seat at this moment, and I regret that he is not. But we are beginning to be accustomed to these insults coming from those gentlemen whose only political stock is this one—their hatred of their Roman Catholic fellow citizens. What does the hon. gentleman expect to gain by all this agitation? Does he imagine for one moment that we from the Province of Quebec fear him? Does he imagine for one moment that the Province of Quebec is going to submit to all his dictates? His object no doubt is to attain to a position which by reason of his alliance with the party with which he was so long connected he could not attain. He wanted no doubt to enter the Cabinet. I believe that was his object. Now, finding that he could not enter the Cabinet, finding that he would not be taken into the Cabinet, he is trying by this other means to attain to the position of leader of the Government in this country. He would like to form a solely Protestant population in this country. He would like to form solely and to constitute solely Protestant schools in this country. He would stand up in this House and tell a Province which sends 65 representatives here that they shall not speak the language which they learned from their parents. From the very beginning of the time in which this animosity took root in his heart, from that moment to this, every political question of any importance to the country at large has been left aside by him simply that he might speak his hatred against the Catholics of Canada, and in particular against the French Canadians of the Province of Quebec. He has met with very little success so far. He speaks of the Province of Quebec as one in which there is hatred. Let me tell him—

Mr. McCarthy—The hon. gentleman will allow me to interrupt him. I did not at all use the expression he thinks. I never referred to the Province of Quebec as having hatred.

Mr. Devlin—Would the hon. gentleman tell us exactly what he did say?

Mr. McCarthy—What I said was that I trusted we were not going to perpetuate the racial divisions which unhappily existed in the Province of Quebec. I never said "hatred" at all.

Mr. Devlin—Very well then. I will immediately give the hon. gentleman an instance of some of the divisions which exist in the Province of

Quebec. In the counties of that Province, which are largely Catholic, in some of such counties the representative is a Protestant. I will take the county which I represent in this House. The overwhelming majority of Ottawa is Roman Catholic, yet I am the first Catholic member that ever sat for that county in this House; a Protestant gentleman represented that county for 30 years. To give him (Mr. McCarthy) a further instance of the same generosity, I may state that the County of Ottawa was represented in the Local House by a Protestant member for years. The Warden of that county was a Protestant; for years the Mayor of the most Catholic city in the whole Province of Quebec—the City of Hull—was a Protestant, and so I could name a good many other counties with a similar record. I could name the County of Lotbinière, which is almost exclusively French-Canadian Catholic, and that county sent a Protestant representative to this House. More than that, it sent to the Quebec Parliament—a Catholic Parliament—a Protestant gentleman to represent it. I tell the hon. member there is no spirit of intolerance in the Province of Quebec; there is no bigotry in the Province of Quebec. There is certainly a spirit of disgust, but that disgust is simply evidenced on account of the miserable attempt of the hon. gentleman to fasten against them this charge of bigotry. Does he claim that the French Canadian people have any right in this Dominion of Canada? He tells us here plainly that the object is to do away with their language. Have they not as much right to speak the French language as he has to speak the English language? What is the object of all his hostility against the French language? What is the object of all his hostility against institutions which have been established in this country, and which have been found to work successfully here? Does he mean to say that a population of nearly two millions shall have no rights in the Dominion of Canada? Sir, I tell the hon. member that every time he stands up in this House to attack us as he has done to-day there are nearly two millions of Roman Catholics in this country who mock at him, who laugh at him, who treat him with contempt; and here in this House what is his following? One lone gentleman. (Laughter.) That is the following he has here, after all these years of agitation against the Catholics. I tell the hon. gentleman that the Catholic element in Canada has been a truer and a better friend of the Dominion than ever the hon. gentleman has. What has he done for the country? Let us examine his career from the beginning to this moment. Let us examine what he was outside the House, let us examine what he has done inside the House. What has he done after all these years to promote the prosperity of his country or good feeling amongst our people? Nothing; nothing. A few mean, despicable attempts at imposing a peculiar kind of legislation. He spoke of the Manitoba school act; he no doubt means to say it is a success. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman does he mean to say that Public Schools or Protestant Schools exist to-day in the Province of Manitoba? The hon. gentleman who introduced the school act is in this House to-day, and he is able to speak for himself on the subject. The Protestants in the Province of Manitoba, who are in a majority, abolished the Catholic Schools under the pretence of establishing Public Schools. Are Public Schools in existence in the Province of Manitoba to-day? No, there are no Public Schools in the Province of Manitoba. I said said so last session; I said so the session before. The schools which exist to-day in the Province of Mani-

to subscribe are purely Protestant schools.

. An hon. member—No.

Mr. Devlin—I beg pardon, yes. The best authority on that subject is the gentlemen who introduced those schools, and I will quote his own words. The hon. member for Winnipeg (Mr. Martin), speaking a short time ago, said:—

"He was himself not satisfied with the school act, and had never been so. He had made a strong effort to have the Public Schools controlled by the Government really made National Schools, with religion obliterated, and he was now more convinced than ever that that was the only school which could be justified as constitutional. They said that the State had no right to interfere in the matter of religion, but he contended that they could not do the one without the other. It had been urged by satisfied supporters of the act that none could complain of the devotional element introduced, as it was of the broadest nature, but they found that the Roman Catholics had the very greatest objection to this provision of the act, and he was dissatisfied himself, and was glad many Protestants shared his objections. It had been said that in the event of his opinions being adopted our Public Schools would be Godless schools, but by many staunch supporters of the school act it had been privately admitted to him that the religious exercises practised in the schools at that time were without value. The Roman Catholics had honestly stated that in their belief the two forms of education should go together. The Protestants admitted, on the other hand, that it was impossible to have religious training in schools, and only asked that it be recognized, insisting, however, on imposing their views on others in that respect. Rather than that small amount of religious training should be done away with in the schools, the Protestants said they would prefer the old state of affairs. He would leave it to his audience to determine which was the more honest stand of the two."

Mr. Devlin continued:—"Documents have recently been put into the hands of every reader in this country by the venerable Bishop of St. Boniface—documents which we will quote further on in the debate on this bill—showing conclusively that the schools which exist to-day in Manitoba are not Public Schools, but simply and purely Protestant schools. I have quoted from the hon. gentleman who introduced this villainous school act in the Province of Manitoba to the effect that the schools there are Protestant schools, and this is your great generosity toward the Catholics of Manitoba. You wanted Public Schools, you said, on the broad grounds of the young nationality growing up in that Province. See the result. You have turned the strong Protestant element of that Province against the poor, struggling Catholic minority. You have not succeeded even in establishing the Public Schools that you pretend by this bill you were going to establish. You have established Protestant schools; you maintain them, and you wish to do the same in the Northwest. Mr. Speaker, last night the Hon. Controller of Customs—and I just quote this as an evidence of the spirit of the bill and the spirit of the hon. member who has introduced it—referred to our church as the 'Romish Church.' He spoke next of its efforts to obtain State recognition in the Northwest. He said that the Archbishop had been fooled in his attempt to secure ascendancy in the Province of Manitoba, and finally he went on to speak of the loyalty of the Orangemen, leaving the inference to be drawn that the Catholics were not loyal. The hon. gentleman uttered three insults in that speech: First, against the church, by the offensive way in