

argument before the Judicial Committee, can it be honestly said by any member of this House, or by any person outside of this House, that my position has been changed in the slightest degree by the fact that I held that brief? Well, Sir, I continued, I think, consistently, in the course that I had mapped out for myself in 1889, from that time onward; and in 1895 I was suddenly called on by telegram from the Attorney General of Manitoba to appear for him at the investigation, or the so-called investigation, which took place here in Ottawa before the Committee of the Canadian Privy Council. At the time Mr. Sifton, who was the Superintendent of Education in Manitoba, was engaged in leading the House, which was then in session, the Premier, Mr. Greenway, being ill in bed. Mr. Sifton urged me to come here and appear for the province, and to do the best I could in opposing the application that was made on behalf of the Roman Catholic minority for the remedial order. I did so. I did it openly and above board. I did not pretend that I was not acting as counsel for the province of Manitoba. I appeared as counsel, I spoke as counsel, and there was no pretense on my part that I was appearing in any other sense or quality than in my professional capacity. Now, if, owing to these circumstances, I have been obliged to give more attention to the subject and to master the details more thoroughly than I otherwise would, I do not know that that disqualifies me in any way from taking part in this discussion. I am not here to defend myself. After twenty years of public life, I do not require to come here to defend my character, in either the one way or the other. If my position is not as good as that of the hon. gentleman or any of his family who have assailed me, then I must occupy, according to my understanding, a low position, indeed, in the public life of Canada. I am quite content that my fellow-countrymen in all parts of the Dominion, who have had full opportunity of understanding my conduct, should place such value upon it and form such an opinion of it as they think fit; and I am quite willing to leave to their judgment the attacks which the hon. gentleman thought fit to make on me this afternoon.

The law of Parliament is quite well settled, and I shall give you an instance to show that I have not violated the law of Parliament, or even committed any impropriety. It will be in the recollection of the members of this House that in the year 1888 or 1889, a special commission was appointed to investigate the charges made against Mr. Parnell and his associates. That commission took evidence and was attended by counsel, leading counsel of England, on both sides. That commission reported to the Imperial Parliament; and upon the report of the commission, a motion was made and a resolution adopted, passing upon the findings. Well, Sir, if I am wrong in venturing to

Mr. McCARTHY.

speak on the subject of the Manitoba school question, so, indeed, must have been Sir Charles Russell, the present Chief Justice of England, the Attorney General, Sir Richard Webster, and, in fact, every leading counsel of the bar in England, because every one of those gentlemen, notwithstanding they were employed and acted as counsel on either one side or the other, took part in the discussion on the motion in the House of Commons upon the report of that special commission. That was not deemed improper in England; that was not deemed a violation of any rule; and it is not a violation of any rule of Parliament. I do not deny that the hon. gentleman was perfectly within his right and privilege in drawing attention to the fact that I occupied the position of counsel for Manitoba with reference to this and other matters. And, so far as that circumstance should appear to detract from any statement or observation I have to make, or any argument I propose to offer, this House is quite at liberty to bear it in mind and be guided in the weight they ought to attach to my statement and argument, anything they think proper on that account. So much for that matter.

It occurred repeatedly, it was the alpha and omega of the hon. gentleman's address. If you leave out the attack on the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) and the introductory attack on the hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace), I doubt if there is anything to be found in the harangue, laboured and tiresome as that was, to which we listened this afternoon.

May I say a word on behalf of the hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace), who is not in his place now, and who was not in his place when the attack was made on him. The position which he and I occupy now does not differ in any regard, so far as I know, from that which we held here in July last. I was one of those who drew attention to the fact that I thought the position of the hon. member for West York in the Cabinet or in the Government of the day was, under the circumstances, unusual, extraordinary, and called for observation. And the hon. gentleman who assailed the hon. member for West York in unmeasured terms to-night was then the Minister of the Crown and the Minister who rose to his feet to defend the propriety of the position which the hon. member for West York took.

Sir CHARLES HUBBERT TUPPER. It was all right up to that date.

Mr. McCARTHY. All right up to that date. If you will allow me, I will read what the hon. member for West York said up to that date, and before that date, openly and above board, and what the hon. gentleman must have known if he kept himself cognizant of what was occurring in public life. The hon. member for West York said, in his address as Grand Sovereign of the Orange Order: