

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I am afraid the hon. gentlemen opposite are not very acute logicians, they fail to see my argument. I was not appealing to the electors, I was not appealing to Protestants, but I was appealing to my own friends who were proposing to desert me on the question of this Remedial Bill, and to vote against me because I was prepared to support remedial legislation in the House of Commons on this issue; and I said: Will you not stultify yourselves if, in so doing, you strike me down, if you strike down the Government and party to which you belong, for the purpose and with the result of bringing into power a French Roman Catholic Premier who declares that he will do more? I say I am in the judgment of the House, I am in the judgment of every man in this country who knows anything of reason or logic, when I say that no such construction can be given to my words as that they were an attack either upon the nationality or the religion of the hon. gentleman in connection with the high office which he now holds. I say that is perfectly clear and perfectly palpable, and therefore the hon. gentleman has no warrant whatever for the statement. I repel with the utmost indignation the insinuation that I could be capable of referring to the nationality or the creed of any hon. gentleman in regard to any position he might hold in this House or in this country. In my judgment I say such conduct would be utterly intolerable. I should regard confederation as a complete failure if the high position of Premier of this country were not equally as open and as accessible to a French Canadian as to any man of any other nationality. Those are my views, views that I have always expressed here and elsewhere. I could give evidence to the hon. gentleman of the most unmistakable character that on an occasion not very remote when the prospective position of Premier was pressed upon me I refused it and declined to take the course suggested, because I thought it would not be undesirable that a French Canadian should occupy the position of First Minister in this country.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Mr. Speaker, I have but little to add to the point I was making in regard to the criticism upon the speech which I delivered at Winnipeg. But I may say this, Sir, that on the morning of the day on which I made that speech the "Free Press" newspaper, which certainly up to that time had been a supporter of hon. gentlemen opposite of a rather pronounced character, published a telegram containing the speech of the hon. First Minister made

at St. Roch, to which I have referred. It was as follows:—

Quebec, May 7th.—In the course of a speech last night Mr. Laurier said in reference to the Manitoba schools, the Government had finally introduced a Bill which was such a miserable thing, that though called a Remedial Bill, the principle of remedial legislation was not within its four corners.

My friend Mr. Ross, Minister of Education in the Government of Sir Oliver Mowat, (great cheering), is with me here on the platform and agrees with me. (Mr. Ross, hear, hear), that there should be religious teaching in the schools.

Mr. Mowat would have approached the Protestant people of Manitoba, not with threat, as was done by Bowell, but would have addressed himself to Christian conscience and told them to give to the minority the privileges of conscience they claimed for themselves, and if the people of Manitoba remained obdurate there were always reserved the powers of the constitution to fall back upon.

On the following day, 9th May, the morning of the day on which I addressed the people at Winnipeg, the "Free Press" said under the head of "Mr. Laurier's Announcement:—

Whatever the reason, the impression created in the minds of those opposed to separate schools here was that Mr. Laurier and the Liberal party represented the forces opposed to coercion in toto, and that from them under no circumstances might a remedial Bill be expected. This impression must now go, and instead of it will come a better understanding of the attitude of the parties toward the question.

I give that as the report in the "Free Press" newspaper of the speech delivered on the evening of the 7th by the First Minister, and the conclusion at which the very able editor of that journal arrived, and they show that the policy of the First Minister and that of the Liberal-Conservative Government were one and the same so far as that matter was concerned. I have endeavoured to show that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Laurier) did not on the recent occasion triumph in regard to either of the great issues that were submitted to the people; and in confirmation of my statement of that fact and of my opinion that the hon. gentleman owes his position in this House to-day as First Minister of Canada, not to the fact that the policy which the hon. gentleman propounded on either of the great issues submitted to the people was adopted or ratified by the electors of Canada, but that the hon. gentleman's triumph was a triumph of race, I read the following extract from "Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke," of 20th June, 1896:—

Mr. Laurier's candidates in this province have gained votes by saying that the Remedial Bill presented on the 2nd of March last, did not grant enough to the oppressed minority, and that if the Liberal leader were returned to power he would grant a measure that would be much more efficacious.