

the past few days. I tell him that I counted sincerely on his support. I could not believe it possible that a man in his position, of his faith, could do anything else than support a Government, largely Protestant, led by a Protestant leader, in a measure of justice immediately affecting his co-religionists. These are subjects, perhaps, sometimes better left unsaid, but I prefer, in this debate, to say out just what I think. I am a Protestant, born a Protestant, as the hon. gentleman was born a Catholic; and I would be ashamed if, for political reasons or on account of the trammels of any association, of whatever kind, I should ever find myself relatively in the position the hon. gentleman occupies today. I regret it, as a Canadian, whatever I may think of it as a party man. I wrote in the public prints that I expected the hon. gentleman to vote for this measure, and I sincerely did expect it. I had every reason to believe it, not merely upon the general principle to which I have incidentally referred, but from following the hon. gentleman as best I could. I know that he is a political gymnast. I know that on straight trade-questions, it is difficult to find him at any particular time, or to nail him down to any particular policy, but I thought that on this question, this question of justice—justice to the Catholics of Manitoba—he would prove himself every inch a man, a Catholic and a Canadian. Why did I believe that? I was glad to find, for instance, that in July, 1895, whatever may have gone before, when the late leader of this House, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) stated what the policy of this Government was going to be, stated plainly and above board—the hon. leader of the Opposition, using this important language, According to "Hausard," he said:

The Government have at last taken a policy—so they say. I am not going to quarrel with them as to the character of that policy.

And, later on, in the same speech, and I take nothing from the hon. gentleman's meaning when I omit what intervenes, he said:

Everybody hopes, everybody expects, that this controversy will be settled by the people of Manitoba themselves.

So I hoped, and, of course, so did everybody hope. Later on, again, when the hon. gentleman contemplated the possibility of our hopes being destroyed, he said:

I do hope, for my part, that we shall be spared even the lamentable spectacle and lamentable event, which, however, I see must come if this question is brought upon the floor of this Parliament, when the lines of parties, I am afraid, will be broken from their present cleavage and reformed largely on lines dividing the Catholics and Protestants into two camps.

The Protestants of this Cabinet were committed to one line of policy—was it possible that I could imagine that a Roman Catholic would be found in what the hon. gentleman was pleased to term, the Protestant camp, as distinguished from the position of the

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.

Government? Hon. gentlemen may decline to follow me in that, but I will give them further testimony. The hon. gentleman was at Winnipeg in 1894. He spoke in the very province in which this troublesome question had arisen, and what did he say in 1894 in Winnipeg?

Prove to me that the complaint of the Roman Catholic minority is true, that their rights are outraged to this extent—

What extent?

—that instead of sending their children to schools where there is no religious teaching, they are forced to send their children to schools where there is religious teaching—

Of a Protestant character? No.

religious teaching not their own, and I will be prepared to go before the people of Manitoba and tell them that such legislation should not stand.

Mr. LAURIER. Hear, hear.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman cheers that statement. He admits the accuracy of the report, will he pretend now, or at any time in this chamber, that there is not a religious teaching being taught in the schools in Manitoba, not that of Roman Catholics?

Mr. LAURIER. This is mere child's play.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman says now it is mere child's play, but in 1894 he said he would tell the people of Manitoba that that legislation could not stand. Could I have anticipated that the hon. gentleman would so speedily change his opinion? Why, the hon. member for Winnipeg (Mr. Martin), supposed to be one of the fathers of this legislation to coerce the minority of Manitoba, put himself on record even in a stronger manner than did the leader of the Opposition. With regard to the Act of 1890, the hon. member for Winnipeg said:

I said then, and I still think, that the clause of the 1890 Act which provides for certain religious exercises is most unjust to Roman Catholics. If the state is to recognize religion in its school legislation, such a recognition as is acceptable to Protestants only, and, in fact, only to the majority of Protestants, is to say what rank tyranny.

Now, there was the position of the leader of the Opposition. And what, after that, did the leader of the Opposition put upon record? Last session, this House cannot have forgotten that he changed the position which he had taken in the debate in 1893. He did not raise the question of these being Protestant schools, but he did raise the question—and put it on an equal plane, of the schools being distasteful to the conscientious scruples of the Roman Catholic minority of Manitoba. This was the language he used in July of last year:

If the schools are not Protestant, they are just as offensive to the Catholics. Why? Because it is part of the Catholic doctrine that the children should have both secular and religious education. If their conscientious conviction is that their children should be taught those religious