

the duty of this House to come and help the Government which has interfered in favour of the oppressed. When, in 1892-93, the Government and the Conservative party agreed to the mode of interfering through the courts, the party and the whole House committed themselves to such a mode, and therefore they virtually adhered to any judgment that might happen to be pronounced. Had the judgment been against the minority, the minority would have yielded to it. Likewise, if the judgment should go against the contentions of the majority, the majority had to bow down. Now, it is for the majority to yield to a judgment favourable to the minority, a judgment delivered by Her Majesty herself; and I think every hon. member of this House, especially those from the Conservative side will be happy to vote for a remedial legislation should the Manitoba Legislature not do its duty as it was called upon to do. This, Mr. Speaker, is a question which has moved the public mind with passion. Moreover, the policy of the Government with respect to it has already received the approval of the people of the Dominion. In Haldimand, the contest was fought on the school question, and it did not prevent the brilliant Secretary of State (Mr. Montague) receiving a majority of nearly six hundred votes. In Verchères, in Antigonish, in Quebec West, it is the Government policy which won the day. It is the remedial order which is accepted by the electorate. And, if I am well informed, in Verchères especially, had not the opposition candidate completely endorsed the remedial order, he would have been defeated and left in a minority of hundreds of votes. The public sentiment in that county was so overwhelming in favour of the remedial order that, in spite of opposition ideas, the candidate, Mr. Geoffrion, had to accept the policy of the Government and promise to his electors that he would vote for the Conservative Government, going even further, possibly than the gentlemen on this side of the House, should the Government introduce a remedial legislation. In Quebec West and Antigonish, the same thing was noticeable. I therefore say that on the 17th April instant, the Government carried the day. I must confess that the Catholics of Verchères could have acted a little better. I think they could have shown a little more generosity to the Government by returning its candidate, especially when the Liberal candidate was endorsing the course followed by the Government. But, after all, there was no matter for surprise, Verchères having been a Liberal county for twenty-five to thirty years. In the very local elections of 1892, when the whole people was aroused, Verchères remained Liberal and would not follow the rest of the province. Well, it is its own business, but

Mr. BELLEY.

I think the great majority in the province of Quebec approve of the course followed by the Government as did the voters in Verchères and that, at the next general election, it will give to the Government an enormous majority. There is now rejoicing everywhere. However, we do not rejoice because we think we have won a victory over the Protestants. There can be no question of Catholics or Protestants in this House, but we are simply dealing with the right of the minorities and due regard for public faith which no honourable man can violate. When we came into the Dominion, we relied on this that the rights of every class would be respected. We signed a compact which we are pledged to respect, and he who violates this compact is derelict to faith. If the minorities should not find in this Parliament the protection to which they are entitled, how could we hope to form a people? How could we go along in peace and harmony? How, for instance, could we hope for the coming of Newfoundland into the Dominion if the people of that Island could not rely on our respect to faith, on the observance of the compact to be signed with them, and if the minority of that Island could not find under our flag that liberty which they now enjoy under their present government? This Parliament is in duty bound to show the greatest respect for faith, the greatest respect for the pledges we commit ourselves to. I join with the hon. member who just sat down in the praise he has given to the memory of the late Sir John Thompson. When the news of his death spread throughout the country, it was the cause of a great surprise coupled with a great pain. He was not only the honoured leader of the Conservative party, but he ranked also amongst the foremost men of our political world. Our whole people will be faithful to his memory and will keep in store the encomiums he so well deserved as well as remind his lofty nature, his powerful logic, his eminent abilities and his respectability. We will, all of us, long remember him as one of the most precious men Canada has ever produced. Reference is also made in the Speech from the Throne to the French treaty. Last year, that question was discussed, and this House approved of the treaty. The Government who is perfecting this commercial engagement will meet with the approval of this House and that of the country at large. The business men are now all one in requesting the ratification of this treaty which establishes closer commercial relations with France. Agriculture has now a good market for its products, but it will soon want a new European market for its cheese and butter, the export of which is now mainly directed towards England. By means of this treaty, the Dominion will secure a very advantageous market for its produce.