

Quebec stated what they wanted in that old province, a certain number of counties to be set aside to be represented by the minority, what was the answer of the majority? The majority never discussed for one moment whether it was asking too much on the part of the Protestants to make that demand, but the only question discussed by those who took part in the framing of that important measure, was this: We do not wish to refuse anything to the Protestant minority, but we should like them to represent those constituencies without our appearing to be forced to make the concession by law; their rights will be respected, they are perfectly safe in our hands, but our only objection is, that it may appear we made this concession by the compulsion of law, instead of doing it willingly, as we are prepared to do. But, Sir, it was not only in relation to these constituencies that this concession was made. Long previous to confederation, the Protestant minority in Quebec, in so far as education is concerned, enjoyed all the rights and privileges which the Catholic minority, by law, enjoyed in the province of Ontario. Not only that, but outside of any constitutional enactment, and outside of any legislative act, when the Protestant minority came to us, and stated that they were desirous that there should be set aside in the common jails of the country special apartments for the women belonging to their own religion, the concession was granted without a moment's hesitation. So it was with the asylums, and so it was with many other privileges given the Protestant minority, which we were not by any means bound to grant by legislative enactment, but which we were prepared to give of our own volition, so as to obtain that priceless boon which we enjoy in the province of Quebec, namely, peace, harmony, and good-will among all the people. I have already stated, Sir, that long before the constitution decreed that the Protestant minority of Quebec should have their own schools and enjoy the same privileges that had been conferred by law on the Catholic minority of Ontario, our fellow-Protestant fellow-subjects in Quebec never had for a moment to dread the least intervention on the part of the Catholics. And, Sir, I am glad to say that not only in the province of Quebec, but in other provinces, there are men belonging to the Protestant Church who view the matter from the same standpoint as we do. I believe that liberal and generous expressions of opinion cannot be too widely circulated when they come from men known to belong to a different church from the one for which they speak, and I shall therefore read to the House a letter addressed by Mr. Carnegie, an ex-M.P.P. of Ontario, to Sir Mackenzie Bowell. Mr. Carnegie says:

Dear Sir Mackenzie Bowell:

While, as I fancy you are aware, I entertain very strong views in opposition to separate

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schools, disapproved and still disapprove of the then Government's failure to disallow the Jesuit Bill, joined heartily in the equal rights movement, until it was virtually strangled by its leader, and still approve of the principles which it was formed to maintain, and above all, endorse with all my heart, Meredith's position on the school question; yet, after reading the report leading up to, and the order just passed by the Governor General in Council with reference to the Manitoba school question, I think you will be glad to learn that I heartily approve of your course in this matter. Indeed, I do not see how you or your colleagues could have done otherwise. To my mind, it is not so far as you are concerned, a question of separate schools or no separate schools, but one of obedience or non-obedience to the Confederation Act. If we do not like its terms and conditions, as I do not in this respect, let us appeal to the enactors of it for the amendment we desire; but do not let us override and defy its provisions. Wishing you a long lease of life, &c.

Your old and sincere friend,

(Sd.) JOHN CARNEGIE.

There is another letter, Mr. Speaker, addressed to Sir Donald A. Smith by the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of Montreal, which I shall take the liberty of reading to the House:

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in

Canada.

Dear Sir Donald A. Smith:

Will you allow me as a citizen to thank you for the very interesting and important historical statement which you gave to the public last week, in response to the requisition presented to you. What you divulge as to the negotiations with the people of the Red River settlement, prior to their acceptance of the terms accompanying their entrance into confederation, to my mind, ought to have much weight in contributing to a solution of the present vexed problem affecting Manitoba. I hope that due regard will be had to the noble sentiment of the 15th Psalm, as to changing not though one sweareth to his own hurt. The good faith of our Sovereign, and of the sovereignty of the people of Canada, whom you represented in the transaction, must be respected even though it entails inconvenient consequences to do so. What you suggest, even as to the limitations of the pledges given, may help to an equitable settlement of the present difficulty. At all events, in view of your statement in this connection, I hope our Protestant friends throughout the Dominion will try and view the matter calmly and consider how it would affect them, had the destinies of a new province been different from what they have proved to be and been in the hands of a large Roman Catholic majority which proceeded to alter the status accorded to the Protestants equally with the Catholics in your negotiations in 1870. As a citizen of this province, I feel that we of the minority are handsomely treated in educational matters by the majority, and I could wish that my co-religionists in the provinces in which they predominate should not be outdone in generosity by their French-Canadian fellow-citizens.

Ever yours faithfully,

(Sd.) ROBERT CAMPBELL.

To the Hon. Sir Donald A. Smith, K.C.M.G., M.P.

Sir DONALD A. SMITH. That letter was written to me last year.