

I am sure honourable gentlemen from Ontario will be convinced that the French Canadians of Ontario are justified in claiming their rights and in asking for the disallowance of the Acts mentioned in the motion of the honourable gentleman from Stadacona. Furthermore, can there be any better proof of the benefits which may be derived from the teaching of both official languages in all the provinces of this Dominion? Can there be stronger proof that the French Canadians of Ontario are not asking that English be not taught in the schools, but that both languages be put on the same footing, as in Quebec, and that they have the right to learn in their own language first, because it is easier for them to begin to learn in their native tongue than in the English language? Is not that a fair demand? Is there anything wrong with that? If not, why slander us as we have been slandered? Why slander those who have been asking for equal rights in this Dominion?

Hon. Mr. BLAIN: Why does not the honourable gentleman use his eloquence and influence in the Ontario legislature, which has all power in regard to educational matters?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Would my honourable friend allow a question? Does he not think that it is for him to do so, rather than for us from Quebec?

Hon. Mr. BLAIN: The province of Ontario and the Ontario legislature are eminently fair with all classes of people. My honourable friend knows as well as any man in this House knows that regulation 17, of which he and his friends complain, was enacted for the express purpose of helping the French people rather than for taking away anything which they possessed.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL: The honourable gentleman might add that the province of Ontario has spent public money for the purpose of educating teachers in the French language.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: I am quite willing to accept the suggestion of my honourable friend (Mr. Blain). I am willing to do what I can in that regard.

Hon. Mr. BLAIN: Permit me to ask if it has never occurred to my honourable friend that since the agitation began with regard to regulation 17, which has been going on for so many years, there has never been a leader of his own in the Ontario Legis-

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE.

lature who has dared to suggest that the regulation be repealed. If the honourable gentleman thinks the Ontario Government, composed as it is of Conservatives, is unfriendly, does he not think that his own party would be willing to listen to suggestions made by him? I do not subscribe, and I do not think my honourable friend subscribes, to the doctrine that the Protestant people of Ontario are anxious to take away the rights of the French-speaking people of that province. I do not think that the agitation of my honourable friend and his remarks from time to time will help his cause. The people of Ontario on both sides of politics are sensible people. They have the reputation of being eminently fair to all classes, and it was owing to the condition of the French schools in Ontario that regulation 17 was enacted. The late Sir James Whitney was so fair about the matter that he established special schools to train teachers in order that they should teach the children under that regulation.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: I am sorry that the honourable gentleman has not spoken before. What he has said is in defence of the law.

Hon. Mr. BLAIN: Perhaps the honourable gentleman will answer my question.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: May I first say that if I were permitted to go to the Ontario legislature, I would do so with the greatest of pleasure, and if my honourable friend will invite me, through his friends, I will do so; but I think it would be better to invite at the same time the honourable gentleman from Stadacona (Hon. Mr. Landry) and the honourable gentleman from Ottawa (Hon. Mr. Belcourt) and we would try to persuade the Ontario legislature.

Hon. Mr. BLAIN: My honourable friend can communicate with the leader of his party there.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY: I did that, and I have not yet received an answer.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: Sometimes leaders have to follow, as they cannot lead. I am willing to believe in the good intentions of my honourable friend. Hell is paved with good intentions, but as the facts are to-day, we cannot for one moment but believe that this law was passed to hurt the French Canadians and blot out their language.

Hon. Mr. BLAIN: Does my honourable friend deny that it was enacted to help the French people?