

in Ottawa, a large portion of my constituents being of that nationality. So, for over fifty years, the French Catholics have enjoyed the "right or privilege" of educating their children through the medium of their own language.

Before Confederation the schools of Upper Canada were under the jurisdiction of a Superintendent of Education. The Rev. Dr. Ryerson, a Methodist clergyman, was the head of the department, and it was he who established the public school system, copying its principles from those prevailing in the United States. Having inaugurated that system, he was naturally desirous of preserving it intact, and when in 1860 my Bill was first introduced it had his opposition; but as years passed on and the subject was freely discussed by the press and at political meetings public opinion favoured the concession to the minority, and Dr. Ryerson withdrew his objection and supported the passing of the Act of 1863. Lest, however, any superintendent of education might make objectionable regulations affecting separate schools the Act contained an appeal by the trustees to the Governor General in Council, whose award "shall be final in all cases."

At this point in his letter Sir Richard Scott quoted section 93 of the British North America Act.

Taking a practical view of present conditions, a majority of the boys and girls do acquire a knowledge of English before leaving school. In Ottawa I am confident that 95 per cent of the pupils in bi-lingual schools speak English perfectly before reaching fourteen years of age, and they realize that a knowledge of the two languages is a great advantage. But, to force French children to learn English in their first year at school, wounds their natural pride, and they naturally resent the attempt.

The same feeling prevails in other countries. For over a hundred years Poland has had the sympathy of the world in its refusal to adopt the Russian language, Germany cannot force its language on Alsace and Lorraine. Surely Ontario is not going to follow the example of Russia in its treatment of citizens who do not conform to the language of the majority.

The Parental Rights.

The child belongs to the parent, not to the state, and the parent should certainly have a voice in the education of his own child. But under the recent edicts the French parent in Ontario has no voice over the education of his children. Any one doubting that statement should read the official circular of instructions for the year 1912-1913. It embraces twenty-five sections and subsections, all crippling the possible education of the French child through the medium of his native language. The circular entirely ignores the board of separate school trustees and places arbitrary power in supervising inspectors who, in the three cases quoted in the press, are admitted to be Protestants, thus necessarily creating friction between parents and trustees. (cf. Rule 17.)

Keeping in view the admitted fact that the present appointees are Protestants, it is clear that members of the Orange Order are eligible for the position of supervising inspectors, and may be selected to dictate the course of studies to be followed by French Catholic children. Is the Catholic parent to have no voice in the education of his child?

The teachers in French schools, unless qualified to teach the public school course in the English language, can no longer be granted a certificate. (Section 13, Rule 17.)

Now compare these arbitrary and harsh rules with the sympathetic and Christian policy meted out to English Protestant children in Quebec. They are placed under the paternal control of the Protestant committee of the Board of Education. The Quebec Government does not interfere with the administration of the schools. In addition to a pro rata share in the general education fund, Protestant high schools in Montréal and Quebec receive annual subsidies. Fifty academies and model schools in cities and towns receive grants. McGill receives \$3,000 for the education of Protestant teachers. The Protestant committee, in addition to other grants, receives \$3,000 to educate bi-lingual teachers. Last session the Legislature voted \$15,000 to aid education in poor Protestant districts. All that and much more is granted in aid of Protestant education; while the Catholic minority of Ontario receives no such contribution and get no share of the taxes of corporate bodies, though they contribute to the wealth of these corporations.

If Sir Lomer Guin were to follow the example of the Ontario Premier and appoint French Catholic supervisory inspectors to supersede the Protestant Board of Education, giving them the powers conferred on the Ontario inspectors, would not such action be denounced over Ontario as intolerable tyranny? Yet that is the policy meted out to the French Catholic parent and child who have crossed the border and sought a home in a sister province. If the language so bitterly proscribed were a foreign tongue, one could understand the reason for crushing it out. But considering that French is one of the official languages of Canada, spoken by 2,000,000 of our fellow-subjects and by over 100,000,000 outside the Dominion, that it is the ambition of cultured men and women in all countries, next after their native dialect, to be able to speak French; and considering that the literature of France is of the highest and most refined standard, the study of the language should not be discouraged. In all international conventions French is the usual medium of communication. Even when about forty delegates from forty countries met in June last in London to discuss the wireless telegraphy and frame regulations for its use, French was the language for the interchange of ideas, and Canada was fortunate in having a representative who was not only a fluent speaker in French, but was also an expert in the subject under discussion. Yet that language is to be interdicted in the French schools of Ontario! Fortunately the constitution provides for an appeal to a higher power.

(Sgd.) R. W. Scott,

Ottawa, Oct. 8, 1912.

The letter was that of a man of great experience and a true patriot. Every word of it may be commended to the sound judgment of every member of this House.

We do not ask that all children in Ontario be not compelled to learn English, or even to become proficient in that language. We are all anxious, whether in