

THE SCHOOL TROUBLES

Mention has been made of the school troubles that arose in New Brunswick. But was it our uniting in Confederation that caused them to be and would they not have come up just the same without Confederation?

Difficulties of the same nature arose in Manitoba. There the Confederation pact was violated to the detriment of the minority and the authors of this fault will bear the responsibility for it in history. These difficulties have been settled as well as was possible, but in Manitoba as well as in New Brunswick, would the French Canadians have been better treated without Confederation?

Ontario also has her grievances which have lasted a long time, too long, indeed. There, the question is . . . The question there is that of language in the schools. The majority maintain that French Canadian fathers are not doing all they should to have their children learn English. And to this the majority reply that they are unjustly and cruelly deprived of the right to have their children taught French in the school.

Language questions have existed since the world has been a world. There were language questions even before the Tower of Babel. Everywhere they cause more or less divisions and regrettable struggles which are always settled in the end, and the same will be true of the Ontario schools. Besides, the terrible war now raging will change so many things in the peoples taking part in it. It is going to be necessary to develop all the resources of our intelligence and utilize all talents to repair its ravages. Rare indeed will those nations be who will be able to speak but one language, and still more rare the countries which can impose a single language on their populations. Yesterday I heard with pleasure the hon. member for St. Georges (Mr. Gault) express the hope that the Ontario school difficulties would soon be settled. He spoke wisely, spoke as did one of the first kings of Hungary, St. Stephen, who said, nine hundred years ago : " *Regnum unius lingue, regnum imbecilis.*" No need to say, Mr. Speaker, that I do not intend to apply that word to any province. I cite it as the opinion of an authority who had to suffer the wrongs which we are suffering ourselves. (Applause).