

maintained, to amend the Separate School act by making any changes necessary to educating the children of Roman Catholics in every way as well as those of their Protestant fellow-citizens. Take Quebec, said the speaker, to which Mr. Meredith had referred. The Catholic majority there was in greater proportion than the Protestant majority here; yet there were no heart-burnings. The matter had been settled, and was disposed of. A complete line of cleavage had been formed between the two classes of the people, so far as their education was concerned. They had each their own Public Schools, each their own High Schools, and each their own University, all receiving grants from the State. The Separate School system was, therefore, much more complete in Quebec than in Ontario. Mr. Ross pointed out that the origin of Separate Schools was a compact made before Confederation by the two classes of the population, to enable Confederation to be achieved. Ontario could sweep away the amendments made to the act of 1868, it could not touch the act itself without infringing upon the constitution. But the sweeping away of these amendments would leave the Separate Schools at a great disadvantage for educational purposes as compared with Public Schools, and it might be expected as a natural consequence that the Protestant minority of Quebec would have the same measure dealt out to them that the Roman Catholic minority received in Ontario. Mr. Ross pointed out that the original act of 1868 had received the approval of the late Dr. Ryerson when it was submitted to him by Mr. W. R. Scott. Coming to the question of inspection of Separate Schools, the speaker referred to the fact that Mr. J. L. Hughes, Public School Inspector of Toronto, was one of the heads of the Orange body and had used very decided language on this subject, and it was natural he would not be regarded with favor for the inspection of Separate Schools. He thought the sense of the community would be opposed to having men who have used such strong expressions regarding the Roman Catholic Church, the priesthood and the nuns set over Roman Catholic schools taught by Sisters of Charity to report upon them. The Roman Catholics would not credit the reports of such inspectors; the speaker himself as Minister of Education would be careful in taking the reports upon Roman Catholic Schools of a man who was wont to assail Separate Schools in language more forcible than polished. Mr. Ross then referred to the indications of increasing division caused by this agitation, as seen in advertisements for teachers which say that "none but Protestants need apply."

Mr. Clancy That is no new thing. Mr. Ross said they were new to him. Such things were disgraceful, the men who started such an agitation were sowing dragons' teeth, the fruit of which the Province was beginning to reap in the rapid growth of the number of schools.

Mr. Ross then took up a number of the arguments of Mr. Meredith. First, he reminded Mr. Meredith that in 1878 he had voted against the ballot. In 1882, he thought, he had voted for it. In 1885 he had acquiesced in the optional ballot, and did not even ask for a ballot for the Separate Schools, nor bring up the arguments about uniformity which he had just uttered. In 1890 he had called for the compulsory ballot, and he was repeating this demand. On the question of the compulsory ballot, Mr. Ross said he knew of no cases of flagrant corruption or intimidation such as to make it necessary for the compulsory ballot for Public Schools, and the majority of Public Schools have not chosen to change to the ballot. Yet the hon. gentlemen opposite, simply declaring arbitrarily that the time had come for the ballot,

would force upon the Separate Schools a compulsory ballot which the majority of Public Schools have not adopted, and which the supporters of the Separate Schools have not demanded. Why confine the compulsory ballot to Separate Schools? Why not carry it into Public and High School Board elections? Mr. Ross then cited the substantial progress made by the Separate Schools in the past 27 years, their teaching staff being doubled and many other improvements introduced. Mr. Ross then held that the Separate Schools do not need the ballot for purposes of administration. They can build their schools, hire their teachers, collect their rates and pay their dues without the ballot, and what more have they to do? The question arose whether Separate School supporters are under any terrorism. Did Mr. Meredith know of any such terrorism? If there was any terrorism there was something terribly wrong, and to eliminate the terrorism the classes exercising it would have to be eliminated. Mr. Meredith had said that the solid Roman Catholic vote was against him, in elections decided by the ballot, and he was so intensely logical that he thought the ballot was necessary for the Separate School Boards. Who would exercise the terrorism but the hierarchy? In that case it was the hierarchy which had to be dealt with, to be abolished. It was charged that the Separate School Boards were under clerical control. Well, clerical control might be bad or good. Many High School Boards are officered by Protestant clergymen; is that clerical intimidation? Is it held that that clerical control is injurious to the schools? If it is injurious, not the Separate Schools alone, but the entire Roman Catholic system, must be proscribed. It was natural for clergymen to assert themselves, and the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church thought they should exercise a certain guardianship which Protestant clergymen do not exercise. As far as the speaker could judge, they usually exercised it for the good of the schools, in securing increased and regular attendance. It devolved upon the hon. gentlemen opposite to prove that there was any intimidation. When the ballot was applied to Parliamentary elections, there were employers of labor who were interested in the issue of those elections, and who led their workmen in platoons to the polls. The ballot was given as a protection to these coerced classes, and it had worked grandly. Open voting, however, is in accordance with the traditions of the race, and is convenient, and there is no reason why it should not be retained unless there are men in a position of influence who make it their business to thwart the will of the people. When such interference is proved to exist in Public or Separate School elections, no man would be more ready to grant the protection of the ballot than the speaker, who was the guardian of the children's education. The country is passing through a peculiar period of its development, Mr. Ross went on. In the early history of a nation it is of the first importance to have the foundations well laid. He felt that the religious atmosphere was not what it should be; that there were cross-currents, aerolites, comets, and other phenomena, which made for disintegration; and the responsibility for such a state of affairs lay with the hon. gentlemen opposite. For years every amendment to the Public and Separate School acts was concurred in by them, they evidently feeling that they were in accord with the interests of the country. But at last some spirit seemed to take possession of them, and they reached out for every advantage they could get, despite the importance of tranquility and good will to the country. In 1886 the *Mail*, their strong supporter, launched out into an active campaign, the effect of which was to promote

religious strife. Instead of repudiating the utterances of the *Mail*, the hon. gentlemen opposite seemed per footly ready to accept them. In 1886, a few months before the election of that year, the *Mail* had published articles, from which he would take the following extracts:

On August 17 it described the Roman Catholic Church as "an aggressive and rapacious ecclesiasticism."

August 28—"The tentacles of the church are felt by the English settler in all things, great and small."

"The church is propped and buttressed by many hoary acts, and is without doubt the most unique and the most oppressive institution of its kind on the face of the earth."

October 4—"The church is seeking to build up, not a British, but a French community."

October 18—"The wonderful fecundity and cohesiveness of the French-Canadian race and its entire subjection to the church, whose bottle-holding is always judicious, make Jean Baptiste a formidable competitor for the soil of a new country. . . . The impeachment of the Dominion Cabinet for having allowed the law to take its course in the case of Riel is nothing more or less than an uprising on the part of French-Canadian nativism and intolerance against the supremacy of British institutions."

October 18—"In our humble judgment the time has come for a general uprising of the British race in the Dominion against so dangerous and degrading a system of government" (referring to the influence of the church in Quebec).

November 6—Referring to the amendments made to the Separate Schools acts the *Mail* said: "If it be asked, What have Protestants to do with the question? the obvious answer is that the power which has just succeeded in securing a British law for keeping Catholic parents and Catholic children down is only waiting its chance to impair Protestant liberties. . . . Albeit her schools, like the Public Schools, receive State aid, the law grants her the right, free from any State inspection or interference, to poison the minds of the children against British institutions by means of anti-British compilations of history."

November 15—"The sale of the Catholic vote has for years been one of the most humiliating and at the same time one of the most dangerous and demoralizing features of Federal and Provincial politics."

November 22—The *Mail* concluded a long article, referring to the alleged feeling against Separate Schools, as follows: "The movement would, perhaps, in time become so general as to warrant our rulers in sweeping away the Separate Schools altogether, a consummation that must be brought about before we can talk seriously of building up a united Canada."

December 2—"Why does the church not give Catholics better schools? Why does she obtain a law from Mr. Mowat virtually compelling them to keep away from the Public School and to support the Separate School, which is confessedly an inferior institution? Above all, why does she train them to herd together as a separate and distinct people, and why does she from time to time humiliate them in the sight of all men by disposing of them to the party, Reform or Tory, which offers her the highest price? . . . And what is to be thought of the Protestant clergy who, as a body, are sitting idly by whilst she is poisoning the wells of popular education?"

It would be noticed, said Mr. Ross, the tone of the articles became stronger as the elections came nearer. This was the literature that was being circulated just prior to the election of 1886. Speaking at London on nomination day, December 21, 1886, Mr. Meredith had expressed himself as follows in regard to these utterances:

"Then, sir, an attempt is being made to make political capital out of the course of the *Mail* newspaper. It has been said that the Conservative party had been raising in this country the 'No-Popery' cry. It has been said that the Conservative party attempted to raise again those cries of sectarian hate and bigotry which were raised in days gone by. I utterly repudiate that they have done anything of the kind in this country. I repeat it, that men who would raise a cry of that kind for the purpose of getting into power are men who should not be entrusted with it."

"Mr. Jas. Mills—Do you repudiate the *Mail*?"

"Mr. Meredith—Does Mr. Mills repudiate the *Globe*? I have laid my platform before the citizens of London, and upon that I am prepared to stand or fall. . . . It is said that I propose to do away with the Separate Schools of this Province. I deny that, and the man who makes that charge in the face of my address to the electors, in which I would maintain them and increase their efficiency, is an unfair man. (Cheers.) As I said before, I am prepared to be judged by my record and statements and nothing else. The men who raised this cry must fancy that the people are not intelligent. This privilege is guaranteed to Roman Catholics and they shall have their Separate Schools. No man could take them away, however much he might desire to do so; but I do not propose to do anything of the kind. I declare it is the duty of any Government in the Province of Ontario to make these schools as efficient as possible that they may fulfil the purpose for which they were established."—*The Daily Free Press, London, December 22, 1886.*

Mr. Ross pointed out that Mr. Meredith had had the opportunity of repudiating the *Mail*, but had declined to commit himself one way or the other. Yet, in face of these utterances, and of the fact that this paper had ever since supported hon. gentlemen opposite, they would now assert they were not seeking to stir up religious feeling and were only disposed to deal fairly by their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens. Now, take the election of 1890. He would quote again from a speech delivered in February, 1890 by Mr. Meredith in London. The hon. gentleman had spoken as follows—"Is there not a great danger to the State in this solid compact of the minority, and in the great heat there is between the parties swaying from one side to the other and exacting from that other what that other in conscience could not give without the support of that compact minority? I say that is one of the dangers to modern civilization. I say that this method of a solid compact, by which both parties are willing to throw down their arms, is one of the greatest evils we have to contend with in Parliamentary government, and against which both parties should unite, unite against the common enemy, for there is danger in the community."

Mr. Clancy said that if Mr. Ross read what preceded this he would find the sentences read did not mean what Mr. Ross supposed they did.

Hon. Mr. Fraser—Repudiation by proxy.

Mr. Ross, continuing, said Mr. Clancy could read this portion of Mr. Meredith's speech by-and-by. He had the whole of it in his desk, but could not see that the sentences quoted meant other than they appeared to. The speaker said that what he sought to show was that hon. gentlemen opposite had identified themselves with the policy of the *Mail* newspaper, and its contention that the amendments to the school-law made by the present Government were opposed to the public interest. He defied any hon. gentleman opposite to name a single instance where amendments regarding Separate Schools or regard-