

the rights and privileges to the minority of Manitoba is a measure on which we have agreed from the time I entered the Government down to this hour, and which we were determined to press on the attention of the House so long as there was the faintest possibility that it could become law. What happened? The remedial order was passed by the Dominion Government. I believe it was passed—I am not quite sure about the date—on 21st March. That order has been denounced by certain hon. gentlemen opposite as very unwise and very harsh and calculated to give offence to the government of Manitoba. But the House must not forget what followed. An answer was sent, after a considerable interval, by the government of Manitoba, and a second remedial order was passed showing how anxious the Dominion of Canada was that this measure should be considered, dealt with and disposed of by the government of Manitoba. The second invitation to take this subject up and dispose of it in a satisfactory manner, was declined, and the Government were compelled to fall back upon the constitution and upon this remedial measure. As to whether the Government have been treating Manitoba with due courtesy, and whether we have been disposed to adopt those mild and sunny ways that the leader of the Opposition suggested—and as to which I quite agree with him, for every means should be exhausted to bring this unhappy question to a satisfactory termination—abundant evidence is now before this committee that we have neglected nothing. My hon. friend from Montreal West (Sir Donald Smith) on his own account and animated by the most lofty and patriotic desire to see this matter amicably arranged by the government of Manitoba, went there for the purpose of seeing what could be done. Some communication took place between that hon. gentleman and the government of Manitoba, after he returned. The first information that was received that the government of Manitoba would consent to negotiate with the Dominion Government was promptly availed of the moment it was received. The papers that are before the House show that the moment it was intimated on the part of Mr. Greenway that he would be disposed to respond to an official invitation to have a negotiation, this was availed of, and the Government at once sent three gentlemen who, I believed then, and believe now, were agreeable to the Manitoba government as could have been selected for the purpose of carrying on the negotiations. They were received with the utmost courtesy by the government of Manitoba, and proceeded to take up this question. Was anything said about a commission? Look through these papers, and you will find that there is no suggestion that the facts were not all patent and known to everybody. Instead of saying at the very opening of the negotiations: Before we can do business, we must ascertain

the facts, and there must be means taken to investigate the facts; it was all taken for granted. That disposes, and I think it is very fortunate that it does, of the position the hon. gentleman held so long, and ultimately, in an unhappy hour, was led to abandon. It has been said over and over again, that this Government has increased the difficulty of dealing with this subject by the harsh spirit in which we approached Manitoba. Is there a single suggestion in these papers that any other mode of approach was possible? I think we can take that part of the objection on the part of the opponents as having been swept away. These commissioners entered upon the negotiations in the kindest spirit, without any complaint being made with reference to these matters. The only ground of complaint arose on a misunderstanding as to proceedings in this House. It will be remembered that the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) suggested that the Bill should not be taken up until Tuesday, and a considerable portion of the press assumed, wrongly, that that was the arrangement. "Hansard" shows verbatim what was said, and shows that Friday was the day agreed to by the hon. leader of the Opposition and myself for taking up the Bill and going into committee. Our delegates saw the statement with reference to Tuesday, and they did not see that with reference to Friday. Consequently, they assumed that nothing would be taken up until Tuesday. That was the only point on which there was the slightest complaint, and the explanation offered by our delegates was courteously received by the government of Manitoba. I refer to that to show that everything that could be done on the part of this Government has been ratified, so far as we can judge, and the imaginary objections raised by some hon. gentlemen have been swept aside by the course the delegates pursued.

But there is another and much more important point in relation to these negotiations, and that is that no person can read over the propositions of the delegates from this Government without coming to the conclusion that they were animated by the most sincere desire to have this question settled in Manitoba, and not here. I do not think that any great advantage will be gained by that attempt to show that this Government has not been anxious from the first that Manitoba should retain the exclusive right to legislate on the question of education, and that the smallest possible concession that would restore the rights and privileges of the minority should be accepted.

Exception has been taken by a number of gentlemen in this House, who speak sneeringly of the minority. They say this is a question between the Dominion Government and the Manitoba government, and suggest that any statement from any source as to what the minority think or feel in this mat-