

done something exceptional, as we are doing now, for we are doing something without precedent, of which we are not ashamed, and for which we take full responsibility. We desire to settle this question locally if we can, but if not, we are prepared to settle it on the floor of this Parliament, where the jurisdiction now exists. That reply from the Manitoba government, dated 21st December, reached here two days before the meeting of this House—and that fact will answer the hon. gentleman who interrupted me as to when their legislature met. It is to this effect :

It is therefore recommended that, so far as the government of Manitoba is concerned, the proposal to establish a system of separate schools, in any form, be positively and definitely rejected.

Mr. MULLOCK. Read all the answer.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. That is enough for me.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. That is enough for any man who is not a quibbler, it is enough for any man who understands the Queen's English—that a separate school system in any form would not be acceptable to them. I am not a member of the Government now, but as a member of the Government then, and as a member of Parliament now, this, to my mind, was definite and conclusive. It barred the door to further negotiations. I do not say anything as regards what has happened since. There never has been a disinclination to meet the Manitoba government half way, but when we are told that legislation based on the remedial order should not be passed, we must recall the lines laid down by the fathers of confederation and by the able leaders who guided the destinies of the Reform and Conservative parties in this House down to the present day.

I deny that this is a Roman Catholic question. I have visited the Orange county of Cardwell, the Catholic constituency of Antigonish ; I have spoken in open day. I have canvassed this issue on the public platform, and my argument in each and every place was the same. I represent as strong a Protestant county as exists in Canada at the present moment, but I have never considered this is a question which appeals only to Roman Catholic sympathies and feelings. Directly the appeal comes from them, for the Catholics happen to be in the gap at the present time, they happen to be oppressed, to be coerced, to be standing begging for their rights that have been decided upon by the highest tribunal in the Empire. But the question to my mind, involves, as the leader of the Opposition has pointed out in past years, the rights of the Protestants of the province of Quebec. In 1893, in far more terse language than I can command, the hon. gen-

tleman traced the history of the appellate clause in the Canadian constitution, and showed that this clause was to protect not the ante-union rights of the province, not merely the ante-union rights of the Protestants of the province of Quebec, but, as he pointed out, the very valuable and important post-union rights of the province of Quebec, obtained not merely in 1869, as some people think, but under later statutes. The hon. gentleman traced the history of that clause, and for what purpose? Let hon. members read the hon. gentleman's speech, delivered in 1893, and they will see that there was much in the conclusion which the hon. member for Guysboro' (Mr. Fraser) stated in Antigonish, that no man could read that speech without coming to the conclusion that the sympathies of the leader of the Opposition were with the Catholic minority. The Roman Catholic minority in Manitoba have had sympathy from 1890 to 1896, and now they want action. They want it in the same direction that I would be willing to go as regards the Protestants of Quebec ; and I could make it absolutely clear that the interests of the Protestants of Quebec are materially involved in this issue. I am unable to understand the position taken by those who are opposed to this proposed remedial legislation, and who are yet jealous of the rights of the Protestant minority in Quebec. How do they act? They say to the Protestants of Quebec: You need not be alarmed. If we deny the so-called rights to Manitoba, it is a Catholic claim, it is a half-breed claim, and involves rights belonging to small portions of the population. You in Quebec need not be afraid—a solemn compact has been made with you, the minority in Quebec ; the Act of 1867 is a splendid protection to your rights ; but the minority in Manitoba cannot get the protection of the courts, and we propose that they shall not get the protection of this Parliament. I think that argument is unworthy of hon. gentlemen who used it. It has been applied by the hon. member for Winnipeg (Mr. Martin), by the hon. member for Queen's, P.E.I. (Mr. Davies), and by other hon. members opposed to the proposed legislation, but their arguments are answered by the declaration of their leader in 1893, who dwelt upon the rights that had been acquired since 1869, rights respecting the proper distribution of the government grants for the Protestant schools, and rights under which a Protestant board is constituted for the management of the public schools. And, if further testimony be required—and I do not go to the minuter history, although I should like to refer to the Protestant teachers' petition and to Sir Alexander Galt's position, of which mention has been made in this debate—yet it is brought out, that Sir A. Galt was asking for this protection, not for the Protestant population merely, but for what he was pleased to call the British population of the province