

that the Protestant Dissident Schools of Lower Canada, and the Roman Catholic Separate Schools of Upper Canada, should be left in possession of the legislation heretofore obtained, but that (subject to certain conditions) all future legislation on the subject of education should belong exclusively to the Legislature of each Province. This manifestly affords perfect security to the Protestants of Ontario, as there are five Protestants in Ontario to one Roman Catholic. Mr. Brown, the champion of Protestantism, in common with the other zealous opponents of Separate Schools 30 years ago, was delighted with this determination of the long and exciting controversy. The B. N. A. Act made impossible any further legislation in favor of Separate Schools or other Roman Catholic institutions and objects, except what the Protestants of Upper Canada should be willing to grant. Accordingly there has since been no legislation, not a particle, which was objected to at the time from a Protestant standpoint. In a speech which I made in 1890, I was able to say, and without any attempt at contradiction having been since made from any quarter, that whatever legislation there had been in Ontario respecting Separate Schools had been passed with the concurrence of every member of the Legislature, Protestant as well as Catholic, Conservative as well as Reformer, and without a word of objection from any one outside the House; not from one church or congregation; not from one society; not from one individual, clerical or lay. Most of the legislation took place while Mr. Brown was alive, and he, as well as other Protestants, saw no particle of objection to any part of that legislation. The Rev. Dr. Ryerson, for so many years Superintendent of Education, and still interested in the work, suggested no objection. It was not until the electioneering No-Popery cry was afterwards raised that objections were suggested; and, more or less excitement having been got up, the objections were made or repeated by honest Protestants as well as by others. I think those objections arose from misapprehending the meaning of the enactments, or greatly exaggerating the effect of them. Since the last general election it is not pretended that there has been any legislation which was objectionable from a Protestant standpoint.

It has been alleged that Roman Catholics have an excessive share of the offices in the gift of the Government. An official paper, which was recently published, giving the actual number of Roman Catholics and Protestants respectively in every department, showed the groundlessness of that notion, demonstrating that they had fewer offices, and received in the aggregate for salaries less than their proportionate numbers.

In the present agitation, the contention is that Roman Catholics should be excluded from the Legislature, and from municipal office, and from public employment. That was not the view of the great Liberal leaders of the past, nor of the Protestants of the Province in their time. On the contrary, four years after Confederation had gone into effect, we find Mr. Brown making this statement:—

"I believe it is the universal feeling of Protestant Reformers throughout Ontario—now that French-Canadian interference in our affairs has been brought to an end, now that the Protestant majority is completely dominant in our Province, and the Catholics placed, by their scattered position, at disadvantage—that it is the incumbent duty of the Reform party, dictated as well by their most cherished principles, as by justice and good policy, that a full share of Parliamentary representation, according to their numbers, and generous consideration in all public matters, should be awarded to the Catholic minority."

But I must not occupy all my time and strength to-day in discussing that subject, interesting as it is, for I wish to talk to you a little of the position of the Province in regard to its assets and expenditures.