

Renfrew would resign to make way for him. To enlist the Catholic support in his behalf, the late Mr. Vankoughnet came to this city to prepare the way. There was a caucus, consisting of eight Catholics, of whom I was one, convened to discuss the subject. At that meeting I moved a resolution setting forth that only on two conditions would the leading Catholics of this city consent to recommend their co-religionists in Renfrew to vote for Mr. Cayley. The conditions were, 1st—that the Ministry, during that session, or at the farthest, during that Parliament, would introduce as a Ministerial measure such a School Bill as was demanded by the bishops; and 2nd—that the ministry, as a Government, would oppose the Orange Incorporation Bill; and that Mr. Vankoughnet would give us his written pledge in behalf of the Government to carry them out. This passed, Mr. Vankoughnet gave the written pledge, and your humble servant, much to his chagrin, felt in honour bound to support Mr. Cayley in his election. So soon, however, as the object was attained, the pledge like many another promissory note was given only to be dishonoured. The Government failed in introducing any School Bill during that Parliament, though they had a steady majority of thirty or forty on all their measures, which could not fail in securing its triumphant passage. Thus they dallied with this important relief: it was a god-send to them to keep it in agitation for years for political purposes: it was the weapon of all others to discomfit the "Grits." Fortunately for the Separate School Bill the Tory Ministry fell, and were succeeded by a Liberal Government in May, 1862. Those, who, like myself, saw the vile use that was being made of this vexatious question, urged upon the Government to lose not a moment in passing the measure, and banishing it forever from the arena of politics. They yielded to our entreaties, they were willing to forego their own convictions for the sake of quelling a dangerous agitation. The School Bill passed the following session (1863) with the entire concurrence and support of the Government, and many of the pledge-makers had the grim satisfaction of voting against it, just as might have been expected.

I can never look back on this episode in Canadian politics without feelings of shame, humiliation and sorrow. Those members of the Liberal party who had for years steadily voted against this measure were on each occasion fully sustained by their constituents; and as an indorsation of their conduct triumphantly returned at the subsequent elections. But when they yielded to the voice of entreaty; when for a public good they did violence to their own feelings in voting for this measure; when they appeared again before their constituents to render an account of their stewardship, and to solicit a renewal of their confidence, some of them were defeated. In effecting their defeat many Irish Catholics, to their disgrace be it told, joined—a fitting reward for their sup-