

members, but I just quote one expression which seems to me to make fairly clear what he and presumably the government propose to do :

It must prove to every reader of that debate, this important fact that when the resolutions were introduced admitting Manitoba into the confederation, it was believed we were granting the same rights and privileges to the Roman Catholics of Manitoba that had been granted to the minority in Quebec and to the minority in Ontario in relation to schools. It was for that reason, believing that we were conceding to that province what they did not then have, that I recorded my vote as I then did ; but I trust the day will never arrive when the party with which I am connected will violate any agreement into which they have entered.

The hon. gentleman recognized the Manitoba Act as an agreement. I hope that in making this utterance, he was speaking in his capacity as leader of the government and as representing the sentiment of the government. I was a little surprised at the reference made by the hon. the leader of the government to what had taken place on former occasions. The hon. gentleman said that it was a matter of satisfaction to know that in 1870 and 1871, a Conservative government was in power in Manitoba ; and he intimated that if a Conservative government were in power there now, they would do justice to the minority.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There never would have been any occasion for such action.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The hon. gentleman perhaps is right—perhaps he is not. He referred, in his speech which I have just quoted, to the difference between the opinions expressed by various members of the Opposition. I am not aware that there has been any very great divergency in the opinions expressed by the members of the Opposition, but if there has been, they are no worse than the government, for the hon. gentleman's own colleagues told totally different stories in different parts of the country. Down in Antigonish and Verchères the electors were asked to support the government candidate because the government proposed to introduce remedial legislation. In the county of Haldimand, however, it was represented that the remedial order was a mere mechanical act on the part of the government—an act, as I said before, somewhat similar to that of a sheriff who served a

writ—and that it did not commit the government to anything. The hon. gentleman took the ground that always and everywhere the Conservative party was the party which had supported the rights of minorities. Now the hon. gentleman's memory must be failing ; because it is within the knowledge of every hon. gentleman here that during the last three elections in the province of Ontario the party with which the Dominion Government is associated made their greatest attack upon the local government on this very question of separate schools, claiming that the Liberal government were too friendly to the separate school system. Not only is that the case, but I happen to have under my hand an extract from a platform adopted by the Conservative party of the province of Manitoba previous to the election of 1892. This document was adopted at a convention held in Winnipeg on the 30th of May, 1892. The sixth article or plank of the platform relates to schools and is as follows :

The Opposition hereby declare :

1. That they are in favour of one uniform system of public schools for the province.
2. That they are ready and willing to loyally carry out the present act should it be held by the judicial committee of the Privy Council of Great Britain, to be within the legislative power of the province.
3. That in the event of such school act being held by the judicial committee of the Privy Council of Great Britain to be beyond the legislative power of the province, they will endeavour to secure such amendments to the " British North America Act " and the " Manitoba Act " as will place educational matters wholly within the legislative power of the province of Manitoba, without appeal to the governor in council or the Parliament of Canada.

Now in the face of these facts, I must say I was surprised at the line taken by the hon. the leader of this House, I have always admired the boldness of our opponents ; and I do not know that I have ever seen a better example of that boldness than is afforded in this case. As to what the government ought to have done in this matter I do not propose to say very much. The hon. gentleman from Ottawa (Mr. Scott), said that the government ought to have disallowed the Acts passed by the legislature of Manitoba in 1890 ; and, under all the circumstances, perhaps if I had been a member of the government I should have been in favour of that line of policy. At the same time, I am not prepared to say that the government were very much to blame for the line which they did take. The resolution introduced by the Hon. Mr.