

under the constitution of the province of Ontario to elect their own trustees. They are deprived by this law of those rights and their elected representatives are replaced by a commission appointed by the Ontario Government. Those ratepayers have been deprived even of the right to dispose of their own money. Is not that a fact? Then the petitioners say, "We ask that this law be set aside by the Dominion Government for these reasons," and I think they are very good reasons.

Now, as the honourable gentleman from Ottawa (Hon. Mr. Belcourt) said, let us suppose the case reversed. Take the law passed by Ontario on this subject, and particularly regulation 17, and change the word "French" to "English" and put that law in the statute books of Quebec. What would be the result? The honourable gentleman said very truly that there would be a revolution in Quebec; the English-speaking people would certainly fight that law. However, I dare say there will be no revolution, because never would a government in Quebec think for one moment of doing such a thing. But if it were done, what would be the result? I will quote to this honourable House the words pronounced by a gentleman well known in Quebec, one of the brightest judges, the Hon. Mr. McCorkill, who had long been a member of the local House from the Eastern Townships of Quebec, who has been provincial treasurer, a member of the Legislative Council, and a member of the Protestant Committee of Education, who adorned the Bench of Quebec for many years. A dinner was given by the Canadian Club of Quebec to the Hon. Mr. Belcourt, of Ottawa. He was asked to put plainly before the people of Quebec the question of the bilingual schools in Ontario and especially to explain the famous regulation 17. The Hon. Mr. Belcourt came to Quebec, both French and English-speaking men were gathered at the meeting, and the Chairman was, I think, Mr. Justice McCorkill himself, though I am not absolutely sure. At any rate, Judge McCorkill listened to the able address which was delivered by the honourable gentleman from Ottawa on the same lines as he spoke here, giving a synopsis of the Ontario Bill and explaining particularly regulation 17. After his forceful and eloquent speech, Mr. Justice McCorkill was called upon to offer a vote of thanks. Let me read to you what he said:

They have adopted our system, but there are two things they have clung to, their religion

and their language. I believe that their national sentiment—

He was speaking of the French-Canadian people.

I believe that their national sentiment is stronger even than their religious sentiment. I really believe so. The national feeling amongst them is intensely strong. But I would ask you, English, Irish and Scotch descendants born in this country and brought up here, supposing a regulation similar to No. 17 were passed in the province of Quebec, what do you think our duty towards it would be? Supposing Sir Lomer Gouin—I cannot imagine it, but suppose he did have the courage, or the nerve so to speak, to pass a regulation of that kind, there would be a rebellion in this province, I think. And here we have our French Canadian brethren of the sister province who, by constitutional means, are trying to obtain the repeal or the modification of the regulation, or some other settlement of the question which would be satisfactory to all concerned.

This is the language of one of the most prominent Englishmen in Quebec, a member of the Protestant Committee of Education. He says that if a by-law like regulation 17 passed by the Ontario Legislature were passed by the Quebec Government against the English-speaking people, there would be a revolution in Quebec. Is it not sufficient to cite that to show that this law, including this regulation, and all similar laws passed by that Government, ought to be disallowed by the Federal Government even if they were constitutional, because, even if constitutional, they are against the good feeling which ought to prevail in this vast Dominion? They are unjust to nearly half of the population of this country, and prejudicial to the welfare of the country and of the Empire itself.

Now, I may be permitted to cite the language of Professor Squair, formerly a teacher of the French language in the Toronto University. I quote from a Toronto paper:

Prof. Squair urged that the flexible and expressive French language be taken up as a serious study in Ontario schools. Hitherto it had been treated as though fit only for ladies. He said that men could surely not wish any more virile vehicle of thought than that used by the heroes of the Marne and Verdun, who had held back the Huns and saved civilization. French had always been, and still is, the language of diplomacy and the highest type of literature.

Why pass by-laws depriving the French people of the use of their language, which, as Professor Squair says, is the language of diplomacy.

Now, at a meeting of the English Public School Committee in the city of Ottawa,