member for London had denounced the Government, when he made an appeal to the electors of this Province, as having been in league with the Roman Catholic hierarchy and as having given as the price of their support certain concessions in respect of Separate schools. Nothing could be more untrue, nothing more unjust. He denounced the Government, too, because they had been instrumental in passing legislation that had tended to increase Separate schools, and he said any man would be a traitor to his country who would pass such legislation. Well, according to his own showing, he and the party to which he belonged must have been traitors to their country, for either they did not know what was going through the House, or else, knowing it, they were, directly, or indirectly, instrumental in passing it. He could take whichever horn of the dilemma he liked. (Cheers and laughter) What he (Mr. Fraser) had to say in reference to the question, as it was proposed to the House, that there should be a change in the laws relating to Separate schools, was, firstly, this: That the British North America Act guaranteed to the Roman Catholics all the rights and privileges they enjoyed at the time that we came into Confederation. One of the rights and privileges that were enjoyed then was the right to maintain Separate schools under the terms and conditions provided in the Separate Schools Act. This House had no power, as he read the law—no power whatever to pass such legislation as was now before it. In view of what had been said by the gentlemen opposite—in view of their avowed and evident intention to abolish Separate schools—he proposed to advise, with a full sense of the responsibility that he might be under to the House, the Roman Catholic minority to resist all these proposed amendments—to resist them on the ground that the House had no power to legislate in this direction—to resist them on the further ground that they have reason to believe that they are not proposed in the interests of Separate schools—to resist them because, in short, they are ultra vires. (Cheers) There was an old saying amongst the Greeks, that they were to fear their enemies bearing gifts. It was well to remember it here. None of these amendments came from the friends of Separate schools. There was a time when the gentlemen who are now proposing to amend the Separate School Act sought to abolish them altogether, therefore Roman Catholics had reason to regard with suspicion all proposals of this kind emanating from them. "We had the privilege," Mr. Fraser continued, "at the time that the British North America Act was passed; we had the privilege under the law of Ontario of taking the certified teachers that we were entitled to take under the law of Quebec, and I say that there was good reason why we should be so entitled. I say that this House has no right under the British North America Act to oppose this. I venture to say that nothing can be alleged against the capacity of the teachers of our Separate schools. They are in every way as fit for the duties they are called upon to perform as the teachers of our Public schools. Here, in the city of Toronto, we are not afraid, so far as our system is concerned, so far as the teachers are concerned, to place them alongside those of the Public schools and to challenge comparison in the matter of capacity. I say that in the Province of Ontario—and I am not now theorising or making rash assertions, or talking for talking's sake—throughout the whole Province of Ontario, taking the Separate schools in comparison with the Public schools, they stand just as high, they rank equally as strong, so far as teaching capacity is concerned. What happened the other day in the city of London, in the constituency of my hon friend? I think every Public school teacher was dismissed.

Mr. Meredith—Only for the purpose of re-engaging and re-classifying.

Mr. Fraser—The system was not working well then. Whatever may be advanced or alleged against the Separate schools, you will find that the same complaint can be made against the Public schools. (Hear, hear.) As was inseparable from any system of public instruction extending over a large tract of country, there are here and there schools that are not free from objection. You hear the same things said even about the churches Occasionally you hear a complaint that this or that church is not so well served, that there is a lack of efficiency, that there are defects somewhere or other that ought to be remedied, and so there will be in any system of the kind; but although you may occasionally find ground for complaint, you will prove nothing against the system taking it as a whole. Take them as a whole, the pupils brought up at these schools can challenge comparison with those attending the Public schools, and the results prove that what I have asserted is true. Therefore I say there are two reasons why things should be allowed to remain as they are; First, the system is working well, and second, we have no power to make the change. The hon. gentleman then pointed out that the Separate schools, having regard to the fact that the Public schools were supported entirely out of the rates and taxes, were not treated fairly, inasmuch as under the Separate school system it was made compulsory for Roman Catholics to get their teachers at as cheap a rate as possible. He had been told the other day, and his authority was first class, that in some cases the taxes raised for the Separate schools went to the Public schools; but what he wanted to point out was that although there was a power in the statute books that authorized Catholic trustees where Separate schools existed to raise a rate for their maintainance, yet it was only a permissive power, and had not been exercised to any extent within the Province. He might be mistaken in making a general assertion, but he was informed that it was a fact. Therefore in a sense they got cheap teaching as compared with the Public schools. There was no one could over estimate the advantage it was to young children that the religious orders of the Church devoted themselves to this work of teaching without any reward save the recognition they received. It was only those who had experienced the benefit that could realize how much the gain was. There was not a single Separate school supporter from one end of the country to the other who would be willing to part with a single advantage that the schools possessed on the ground that the teachers did not carry the certificates that other teachers possessed. (Cheers) So much for this part of the subject. He objected to the proposal to impose the ballot upon Separate school supporters for various reasons. One reason, as had been well pointed out by the Minister for Education, was that the compulsory adoption of the ballot would be a violation of the Constitution. It was only necessary to look at the system of election in operation at the time of Confederation to see in this, what everybody would be prepared to admit, an infringement of their rights, an attempt to do away with the privileges that the Roman Catholics enjoyed under Confederation. But there were other reasons why he objected, why the Roman Catholic minority of this Province objected, to the introduction of the ballot. "You cannot," the hon. gentleman proceeded, "disassociate it from the discussion outside; you cannot disassociate it from my hon. friend's London speech; you cannot disassociate it from what was contained in the platform of hon. gentlemen opposite; you cannot disassociate it from the fact that all over the Province it is offensive to the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church; that it is offensive to the clergy of that Church; that it is offensive to the laity of the Church in that it insinuates that only under the ballot could their rights and privileges be maintained. (Cheers) The hon. gentleman, in order to make more studiously offensive what was already offensive enough, made the insinuation that the laity were afraid to exercise their undoubted rights on account of the improper influence of the clergy. I say there is no self respecting Roman Catholic in this Province of Ontario who will not feel keenly the insult to his clergy. It is a studied offence to the laity. It says in effect that we Separate school supporters are slaves, bondsmen and serfs—not allowed to control our own action—not allowed to have our own wishes in the election of trustees It said this because forsooth in the city of Toronto in certain localities the priest happened to be exercising his legitimate influence in the matter of elections. (Cheers.) The Roman Catholics were asking for this legislation, and I promise that they know much better what their own requirements are than do the gentlemen opposite or any other persons outside their Church." Was there, Mr. Fraser asked, a single denomination in the Province of Ontario who would not resent such legislation as this? Put the members of the Methodist persuasion or of any other denomination in a position similar to that of the Roman Catholic minority, would the House dare to force upon them such alterations of the law unless they were asked for? If any party proposed to abolish the privileges of any religious denomination, that denomination would be found a unit in opposition. The hon. gentleman had laid down the rule when he appeared before the electors of the city of London that the Roman Catholic minority, because it was a solid, compact, political unit ruled by the hierarchy, should be regarded as a common enemy, and where there was a common enemy people were justified in uniting against it. If this were so, then, according to his argument, every religious denomination that united in defence of its rights should be treated as a common enemy. It would be the same were a proposal made, on the principle that there ought to be only one university in Ontario, to abolish the Victoria University or the Queen's University at Kingston. Does any one suppose that these universities would not stand up as a unit to defend their rights; and were they to be regarded as a common enemy? If they proposed to interfere with the smallest right of the Presbyterian University of Queen's did they suppose they would not find the Presbyterians united against the political party at the next general election that attempted to infringe that right? (Hear, hear.) He wanted to know why it was that a different line of action was to be expected from the Roman Catholic minority than would, under similar circumstances, be expected from a Protestant denomination. Their educational institutions were as dear to Roman Catholics as were those of any other denomination to the members of their body. When danger assailed them was it not to be expected that they would unite even more closely than they had done? So far as the Conservative party was concerned, they were pledged to abolish the Separate school system—they were pledged to the hilt to do so. They had made it a cardinal point in their political platform, when they accepted the sanction of the of the Orange Lodges. This was their platform, adopted at a meeting of the Grand Lodge of Ontario West, at Hamilton, at a meeting held on the 15th and 16th February, 1876, and it was the platform of the hon. gentleman and his colleagues:

Resolved, that, in the opinion of the Right Worshipful Grand Lodge, the time has arrived when the Orangemen of Canada, without reference to politics or political parties, must unite in one grand political phalanx in order to stop the encroachments of the Romish Hierarchy upon the body politic of the country, and that the following platform be adopted:

Unswerving and undiring allegiance to the Mother Country and British Connection.

(2) No grants of money from the public purse for sectarian purposes

(3) No Separate schools, but free secular education for all.

(4) Taxation for all; taxation of all property held by religious bodies upon its fair assessment value.

(5) The opening of all public institutions in the land, religious or otherwise, to public inspection by Government officials.

(6) That it shall be the duty of the County Master in every Orange county, in the event of a general election or other election, taking place, either for the Local or Dominion Parliaments, to submit the platform to the candidate or candidates to ascertain if they will support it or not, and then to call a county meeting before the day of polling, and if neither of the candidates will support the said platform then it shall be the duty of the County Lodge to bring out a candidate.

The hon. gentleman and his colleagues were under the power of the Orange Lodges, and he (Mr. Fraser) did not think the day had yet arrived when the Roman Catholic minority was to be controlled and ruled and legislated for by Orange men. The Roman Catholics resented this measure as an interference with their rights, as an insult to themselves; they objected to it because they did not require it, because it was proposed to thrust upon them legislation that they did not ask for, and they opposed it because it was ultra vires The Roman Catholic minority didn't propose to stand calmly by and see cut away, chip by chip, the whole of the Separate school system. If hon. gentlemen opposite could have their way, if they could effect their purpose, the guarantees given under the British North America Act would be only a sham, a delusion and a snare. He had a few words to say with reference to the necessity for giving notice. It was sometimes said in the country that the amendment of 1879 was introduced to do away with the necessity for giving notice. There never was any such intention. Those responsible for the amendment proclaimed almost from the housetops that it was necessary for Separate school supporters to give notice that they were such. Before the last general election the Attorney General sent an open letter to Mr. Milligan showing as clearly as he possibly could that the law still required notice on the part of anybody intending to become a Separate school supporter; and that if he wanted to again become a Public school supporter he had to give notice. He (Mr. Fraser) during the last general election held several meetings, and at every one of those meetings he put it in the plainest language he could that there was no such thing as becoming a Separate school supporter without doing so. The amendment of 1879 was intended simply to provide for the proper machinery for the elections, more particularly as regarded municipalities.

Mr. Meredith—Why did not the municipalities act?

Mr. Fraser—The hon. gentleman had given quotations showing that notice had not been given in some municipalities since 1879. He would find that prior to 1879 there was no notice given. He (Mr. Fraser) had made diligent inquiry, and although there had been Separate schools in existence for thirty years there were no Separate school notices given. He was bound to say, if he told the truth, that he never himself gave a written notice that he would become a Separate school supporter. Even here in the municipality of Toronto, and in all municipalities where Separate schools existed, the authorities did not care a brass farthing whether the Roman Catholics gave notice or not. They were acting fairly and legitimately although no notice had been given. He would undertake to say that throughout Ontario, until this sectarian cry had been raised, not even the most vigorous opponents of Separate schools concerned themselves with whether notice were given or not. The fact was that every Roman Catholic was a Separate school supporter, but no notice could be found with the clerks of the municipalities. On the other hand, everybody who was not a Roman Catholic was supposed to be a supporter of Public schools. The public officers recognized this. He was not prepared to speak for every municipality, but he would undertake to say as regards the city of Toronto that up to 1879, and even since that time, notice had not been given, and it was a significant fact that nobody had been found mean enough to make an appeal against a Roman Catholic because he had not given notice. Was not this a proof that they had acted fairly and gentlemanly—that they were acting in a neighborly and friendly way one toward another—that the Protestant majority did not care whether Roman Catholics gave notice or not, so long as they were voluntarily supporting their schools, that was all that they concerned themselves about. They did not ask for the amendment of 1879. As a matter of fact, in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, probably in almost all cases, the assessor was a Protestant, and being a Protestant he knew who the Public school supporters were. He would ask anybody who knew the condition of affairs—he would ask the hon. gentleman himself—whether the state of affairs was not practically that every Roman Catholic, with very rare exceptions, was known to be a Separate school supporter in the municipality with in which he resided.

Mr. Meredith—I have no knowledge; I cannot say.

Mr. Fraser—I say that this was so in nearly every case. This was the state of affairs when this assessment law was passed in 1879. If they had the same regard, he contended, to the interests of the Roman Catholic body that they had for interests of the Wesleyan, the Presbyterian, the Baptist body or the Church of England, they would not attempt such legislation as this, for they knew it would not be tolerated by the vast masses affected by it. Mr. Fraser then, at considerable length, quoted from the reports of the *Globe* and the *Mail* of the debate in Committee when the Act of 1879 was before the House. The report read:

"Mr. O'Sullivan moved an amendment to the bill providing that every Roman Catholic should be deemed ipso facto a Separate school supporter, and that notice in writing should be required to be given by a Roman Catholic rate-payer before school taxes levied upon his property should be applied in aid of Public schools." The report of his (Mr. Fraser's) speech read: "He desired that nothing should appear in the Act which might be claimed as unconstitutional. The fundamental principle of the Separate school was that it was permissive." It was clear that Dr. O'Sullivan thought that notice was still requisite, and that he (Mr. Fraser) did not say anything to the contrary. The report of the debate proceeded:

"Mr. White was somewhat surprised that the Commissioner of Public Works should discourage the motion of the hon. member for East Peterborough. He was not sure that it required an amendment to the Assessment Act, and if necessary he suggested that the consideration of the present bill should be postponed. In any case he submitted that there was nothing asked for but what was fair and reasonable and he believed the House was prepared to grant it.

"Mr. Sinclair said the idea of allowing any person to support the Separate schools if he wished simply meant that persons who cared nothing for the principle would support that school when the taxes would be lightest. Mr. Crooks (who was the Minister of Education at the time) said this would elevate the Separate school system into a rival of the Public schools The British North America Act provided that existing privileges of Separate school supporters should be continued, but this amendment would make the Separate school compulsory" The principle of Separate schools, Mr Fraser continued, after reading the above extracts, whether Protestant or Catholic, was simply permissive, and he was not prepared to go so far as to guarantee any support to them. His contention was that not only should every Roman Catholic be regarded as a Separate school supporter, but that he should not be regarded as a Public school supporter unless he gave notice. He was only in favor of an alteration of the law so far as the change was required by public necessity. It was necessary to provide some machinery for distinguishing between Roman Catholic school supporters and Public school supporters; and the machinery which was provided in the bill introduced by the Minister for Education was the simplest and the most fair. He denied that there had ever been a single utterance of his made which could be construed into a contention that the Separate schools should be compulsory; and the hon. gentleman must have misunderstood the position he (Mr. Fraser) had taken up when he said what he did in his speech at London. If the House were willing and there was no objection by anybody to the provision, that every Roman Catholic should be compelled to be a Separate school supporter, he would oppose it on the ground that the Legislature was assuming a prerogative that might eventually lead to the abolition of the Separate schools. There was one other bill he would refer to—that relating to High school trustees. The Separate school supporters were not very much concerned about that bill. It was never asked for by priest or Bishop. Some of us thought it would be a good thing, however, to interest them more largely in the High schools. If this House were of opinion that the privilege given of electing a High school trustee as well as a School Board should not, as yielding to popular clamor, cant and hypocrisy, be taken away from the Separate schools no objection would be raised. At the same time he would be greatly disappointed if they did that, for the House was hardly likely to take away from the Separate schools a privilege that did nobody any harm. Moreover, wherever there was a High school in existence every Roman Catholic must pay taxes in support of it, and it was thought that the power of voting for the High school trustees would interest the Roman Catholics more in these institutions, and the result proved that they were right. If the Protestant majority of this country thought this should not be continued, by all means let it be taken away; but if the House decided to do so he did not think it would be acting in the best interests of the country, in the best interests of the High schools, or in the best interests of the cause of higher education. There was nothing the Roman Catholics held more dear than the Separate schools, and if the House passed a law abolishing them there would still be Separate schools. What, after all, did they get towards their support? They got about $18 000, about 60 cents for each pupil in the Roman Catholic Separate schools. What was that amongst them? His hon. friend had shown that in this small contribution there was some connection between Church and State because there was religious teaching in the schools; but if there was a violation of the law in this respect as regards these schools there was an equal violation so far as the Public schools were concerned. Undoubtedly there was religious teaching given in the Separate schools; that was the reason for their existence. If Roman Catholics did not intend to give their children religious education they would not ask for this system. It was, so far as religion was concerned, so far as the great hereafter was concerned, that they asked for this Separate school system. As regards the connection between Church and State there was just as much of it in the case of the one class of schools as in the other. He was surprised that the Protestant bodies did not unite and have a great deal more religion taught in their Public schools than there was now, where nobody's convictions could be in any way endangered. He was talking now of the great centres, where there were Roman Catholic schools, and where the Public schools were attended by exclusively Protestant children. He was surprised that there was not more religion taught in the Public schools in such places than there was to-day. He asked the pardon of the House for having detained it so long. He had endeavored to put the case on behalf of those for whom he spoke as fairly as he could, and he hoped in doing so he had not given offence to any class. He concluded by expressing the hope that the time may never come in the Province of Ontario when the people would be called upon to deal with the question of the abolition of the Separate schools. His hon. friend had put the case before the public in three or four general elections and he had failed every time, and he (Mr. Fraser) would venture to predict that he would find the same thing true on this occasion. He hoped the great Protestant majority of this country would not be led by hypocrisy and cant, nor allow the ship of State to pass into the hands of any man who was willing to give up the opinions and convictions he had expressed in former days in order that he might gain possession of the Treasury benches. (Loud cheers.)

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