

a very good memory, but I can go back a bit in Canadian life. I can hear almost now the indignant tones with which he denounced the mischievous and horrible policy that was launched before the Canadian public by the hon. member for Simcoe in 1890; and I will go a bit behind that, in order that the public, whether they be Protestants or Catholics, shall at all events, before they pass their verdict or give their judgment at the general elections, understand what we have to say upon our side in regard to the situation as it meets us.

What was the state of affairs between 1867 and 1889, as regards the old provinces of Canada? What was the state of affairs and public opinion as regards Manitoba between 1870 and 1889? I make a challenge—I make it for the purpose of debate. There are hon. gentlemen to follow me. I say here that I challenge hon. members on your right, Mr. Speaker, or on your left, to name one single leading public man, Liberal or Conservative, or whatever political stripe, who between those dates ever suggested in regard to our constitution that when separate schools were established, either before or after confederation, they could be interfered with or finally legislated out of existence or away. I submit that is an important question. I submit that any fair-minded man will agree with me that if my challenge cannot be accepted, we are bound to look and inquire very carefully into the matter and as to the time in which the new doctrine was promulgated. I have heard it, sitting in a quasi-judicial capacity, put before me by the counsel for the minority, that the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) was the disturber of the Queen's peace in Canada in regard to that question. I have seen him unable to grapple with the fact successfully, though endeavouring to deny it. I have seen it clearly established in that argument, which is, I am glad to say, fully reported and at the command of members of this House, that the hon. member for North Simcoe was the man who suggested the way and the means by which we could have thrown into our arena and into our country the apple of discord that did so much trouble in days past. Fortunately, because no one took up this question so ardently as the hon. gentleman, there has been nothing since 1867 comparable to what occurred previous to that year when free and independent parliamentary men did wage a dangerous and exciting war over it. But nevertheless it is significant when we find the leader of the Opposition giving his support to this movement, and I desire the country to understand the full measure of responsibility which the leader of the Opposition has taken on this occasion. Let me take, for instance, the "Globe," and I give that paper credit for all along endeavouring to be consistent in regard to a spirit to grind down into one system of uniformity all the religious teaching that ought to be given in public schools,

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which, that paper being Protestant through and through, they think is the system that ought to be general, and is the one that is commendable and has been commended by the representatives of Protestant schools. But to show that this question was definitely settled in 1867 and afterwards, as regards Manitoba, in 1870, I read, without apology, from the "Globe" of November 27th, 1876, where it says:

We noticed recently the movement in Manitoba, having for its object the reform or improvement of the public school law of that province, and referred to the efforts made in other parts of the Dominion to effect such arrangements as while securing the practicable system of education are designed to protect the rights and consult the conscientious scruples of minorities. But it must not be understood from this that in Manitoba any more than elsewhere, the rights of minorities can be overridden or ignored.

The local legislature may of course effect any changes in the administration of the school laws and not violate existing rights and privileges, but can do more than this. The Manitoba Act, which is the constitutional charter of the province of Manitoba, contains the same provisions that are to be found in the British North America Act in regard to the rights of minorities in the other provinces in this respect.

That I say was the general opinion. That is the statement that was never controverted by a single individual on the floor of this House, though the school question was threshed out in the case of New Brunswick, and these various Acts were discussed by hon. members on each side of the House. But what happened? In 1889 the hon. member for North Simcoe appeared on the western horizon. That hon. gentleman fretted in the party chains, under that party discipline which alone can secure the success of any party under our form of government and our institutions, and he got away. First there was a grievance in regard to the Jesuits' Estates Act. He was connected primarily with the Equal Rights Association, established in 1889. I quote from an address of the provincial council of that session respecting separate schools. It is signed by Wm. Caven, Chairman; E. D. Armour, hon. Secretary, and says:

Denounce every compact, any legislation which appropriates public funds for sectarian purposes, as separate schools in this province certainly do.

I want to point out that for nineteen years not only had peace and contentment prevailed among the citizens of that province, but it had attracted a splendid class of population from the older countries of the world, and had within that short time made itself a province and a portion of this Dominion of which all people in the eastern provinces were proud indeed. No public man, no man on any hustings, so far as I can ascertain, and the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) when acting as counsel for the Manitoba government was unable to show the contrary, suggested that the separate school