

time should be given. The people of Manitoba have a strong opinion that separate schools are not suited to that country at present. The people of that province are a loyal and a law-abiding people and are largely composed of the same people who dealt with the separate schools of Ontario, in a way that everybody knows. In Ontario, the great majority were non-Catholic, just as the great majority of the people of Manitoba are non-Catholic, and as soon as the position of the schools was such that the people were under no further apprehension of being coerced by laws which they did not want, and to which they were opposed, they acted in a generous and fair manner—generous and fair according to the judgment of the minority itself, and that minority have ever since conceded. Separate schools in Ontario as constituted at the time of confederation were not provided with the means of efficiently discharging the work for which they were created; and the people of Upper Canada gave them such amendments as the minority and their representatives thought sufficient for their purposes. The majority might have rejected every one of those amendments. They might have rendered the work of separate schools more difficult, but they did not. On the contrary they put the separate schools into a position far superior to that which they occupied at the time of confederation. But they were a loyal and law-abiding people, and felt this course to be their duty, and accepted it. And I may add that the Acts which they passed had the approval of Conservatives as well as of the Liberal party. Now, the same spirit, I have no doubt, will be manifested in Manitoba, and any steps to coerce the people of Manitoba into that which they were not at the time prepared to coerce them immediately, only allowing a few weeks before the coercion was to come into force, was unstatesmanlike, and injurious to the country, and objectionable from every public point of view. But that was the position that the late government took. Now, what was the position which the Liberal party took? They recognized the great evils of coercion. They believed that the Roman Catholics themselves would not, in the long run, gain any advantage from it, that it was not in their interest that they should be in a position of antagonism towards the great majority of the people; that the proper course was to obtain such terms as might

be practicable from those who represented the majority in Manitoba; and to bide their time for such improvement, by means of legislation and otherwise as might remove such grievances. That was a course which the result in Ontario and also the result in the maritime provinces would justify being taken. In the maritime provinces there is no law in favour of separate schools and never has been. But so fairly has the majority governed in those provinces, so kindly have they acted towards their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, that the system in operation there gives satisfaction to them and has done so for many years; and it gives satisfaction without legislation and merely by administration. In dealing with this Manitoba matter the Liberal party considered that these things indicated the course which was in the interest of the country and of Roman Catholics themselves. Coercion is a very bad thing in such a matter; it is so bad that it ought only to be resorted to as a last remedy, even if in such a matter it should be resorted to then. The leader of the Liberal party has announced his opinion, and the party generally concur in it, that it was better to accept almost any measure that could be obtained without coercion, rather than to obtain a more satisfactory measure by means of coercion. That was substantially the policy announced by the party before the last elections. The settlement had not then been made. The Liberal party was not in a position to make any settlement, but that policy was announced as the principle of the party and it was the principle on which the party went to the polls. My hon. friend picks out a sentence here and there from this speech and that speech, and says that things were said inconsistent with that view. I do not think it necessary to follow my hon. friend in that respect. I do not consider it necessary to defend my friends in the other House against charges of inconsistency. If the charges are made there, they are made in the presence of those against whom they are made. It would be unreasonable to suppose that any large proportion of our people could have been misled by inconsistent statements of prominent speakers because what a man says in one place is immediately published over the whole country. What he said in Quebec is published in Ontario, and what he said in Ontario is immediately published in Quebec,