

a sentiment exists in some quarters throughout this country, which would favour uniformity of language, of laws, of habits, and of thought. Most of those who hold such views come from the British Isles, where five distinct races and languages have held sway and still maintain their special characteristics. French is an official language in the Channel islands.

Each race contributes to the nation as a whole its qualities and special aptitudes. How much would humanity lose if Europe were all French, or English, or German, if diversity and contrasts were replaced by a monotonous uniformity! Is it in the interest of North America that such a state of things be created?

Hon. Mr. DAVID—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—In the month of August, 1913, when this very regulation was passed, the International Geological Congress was held in the city of Toronto. It was attended by 600 delegates from perhaps all the nations of the world, and the only language which every one could understand, and which was their official language, was French, which held sway for quite a number of days exclusively.

The knowledge of French is too valuable an asset to be treated with disdain. No European deems himself fitted for public life who does not possess that language. With all the peoples who dwell in the Mediterranean sea, French is the language of communication between them. In Egypt where ten races meet, French holds the first place. It is spoken by them all. The proceedings and discussions in all international meetings and congresses are carried on in the French language.

Our resistance to assimilation or absorption should rather draw commendation from our English-speaking compatriots. Is it an evidence of the quality of our race? An inferior material gives way while granite endures.

We belong to the French race, whose civilization has dominated the world for centuries, whose exuberant genius has, to this day, furnished the world with ideas and ideals. We are naturally proud of our lineage. Our forefathers discovered and founded this Canada of ours. We spurn the idea of an inferior status. We claim full partnership, with equal rights and responsibilities, in the upbuilding of our common country.

We are, in Canada, two millions of Canadians of French descent. We govern the

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

second largest province of this Dominion. We have shown in that province the greatest respect for the rights of the minority. We expect from the majority of our sister province of Ontario a treatment compatible with our own dignity.

I have not discussed the constitutional aspect of the question, because the Ontario Government recognizes the right of the French minority to a French education. It, at all events, admits the use of French. My sole aim has been to show that the regulations governing the teaching of French are so restrictive that a French child will not have a fair chance of learning his mother tongue in those English-French schools recognized and supported by the Government. The Minister of Education can easily revise those regulations in a manner that will restore peace and harmony, not only in his own province, but in my own province as well, which is justly moved and disturbed by the appeal which the French minority is making in this matter.

Hon. Mr. McSWEENEY—I have been asked to say a few words upon this question and they will be brief. In New Brunswick we had school troubles for some time, and after seven years an agreement was reached, not by law, but by mutual forbearance, and mutual arrangement. In the city of Moncton, from which I come, we have separate schools, or rather Catholic schools and they rent these buildings to the trustees for a nominal sum. The taxpayers save a great deal of money, because the rental is very small. We have a large number of French children there, as well as Irish Catholic children, and there is an agreement between the trustees and Catholic authorities to allow them to teach the first and second forms in French, and after that English is taught. Besides, after school hours they can give religious instruction for half an hour. That is not sanctioned by law; it is by an agreement with the trustees, but it works out harmoniously. Everybody is satisfied and there is no difficulty. Of course, the whole thing is in the hands of the provinces, and I do not understand why they cannot change that Regulation 17—any regulations for that matter. What the French people want here in Ontario is as follow:

1. The respect of their rights in the education of their children in schools that are maintained with their money.
2. An efficient teaching of the two official languages of the Dominion, during all the primary course in schools or classes frequented by their children.