

any man who spent his childhood there has received no other education than that given by these friars and nuns under the control of the hierarchy: In that Liberal Catholic and French Canadian city of Hull the Scotch Presbyterian Conservative candidate had a majority of the votes. Sir, the province of Quebec, where you may so frequently notice Protestant Englishmen elected by a French-speaking majority, is the only province where you find such proofs of toleration and breadth of view. And the same has been true since confederation and long before confederation.

Mr. Speaker, may I be allowed to speak of a little experience I have had in this relation? It shows the working of the school laws in my province. There is a small country newspaper in the county of Quebec which has declared that the result of the separate school law in Quebec was to drive the Protestants out of the province. I refer to the Huntingdon 'Gleaner.' And the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) has re-echoed that declaration. I passed most of my life—and my happiest days, because they were before I entered public life—in a small village on the borders of the Ottawa river forming one municipality of eight hundred souls. This village was separated municipally and for school purposes from the parish in which it was situated and which also contained some eight hundred souls. In these two municipalities there were three English-speaking Protestant families. The father of one family was the head of a large lumbering firm and the fathers of the other two families were the other's clerks. These three families lived in the village. They organized a separate school under the law. Then the lumbering company bought immense properties in the parish. Under our 'priest-administered' law, the Protestant ratepayers—as they were entitled to do by law—annexed this property to the village for school purposes, thus depriving the Catholic ratepayers of the parish of all the receipts of their schools on account of that land. But there was not a word of dispute. There came a time when the separate school was not carried on according to law, because, in our province as in others, it requires a certain school attendance to make a school under the law. There came a time when all the taxes paid by the Protestants went to support a school where there were only five or six children, which is only half or one-third of the number required under the law. One of the Catholic ratepayers suggested: 'Why don't we abolish the separate school and get all that money?' I put my foot upon the proposition at once. I said: 'My friend, if you think as I do and as, I believe, the people of this parish and of this village do, you will never ask a man, rich or poor, to contribute a cent to the maintenance of a school system in which he does not believe.' And the whole

population was with me. That whole 'priest-ridden population'—and they were poor farmers—preferred to pay twice as much as they otherwise would rather than ask these Protestant ratepayers to contribute, as they were legally bound to do, to the maintenance of any other than this separate school. Show me such an example in any of the English-speaking Protestant provinces of this Dominion, and I will admit that the separate school system cannot develop a national spirit.

Let me refer my hon. friends to the example of a country, that, perhaps above all the nations of the earth, has done most for the development of ideas of liberty and toleration: the little republic of Switzerland. There is in Switzerland a population composed of three nationalities with clearly marked differences of religion. They have the Protestant Germans and the Catholic French and Italians. After their common struggle for liberty, they fought among themselves for years and for centuries—the Germans to impose the German language and the Protestant religion upon the others and the French seeking to impose the French language and the Catholic religion upon the Germans. But the day came when they found out that only principle under which they could maintain their union was that every man should be free to worship God in his own church and to educate his children in his own school. And upon that principle of toleration they have carried on their schools; and to my mind, their national spirit is much more united, than unfortunately ours is at the present day.

Now, Sir, there is one last point I wish to make. I contend that if we look upon this question from the point of view of a broad national ideal, not only should we propose the widest measure of liberty for the minority of the Northwest, but, even if it were not asked for and if we were not bound to give it, we should, in duty to Canada and to the integrity of the empire, establish separate schools in the Northwest in the fullest sense of the word.

I have stated, at the opening of my remarks, that nobody knows what the population of that country will be fifty or one hundred years hence. Do you want to make it safely Canadian? Do you want to have there a nucleus of population whose only love, whose only care will be for this soil of ours, who will have no other devotion but to the future and the welfare of Canada? Open the Northwest to the French Canadian, implant him there and give him all his freedom and liberty. Make him feel that he is at home in the west just as much as in the east, make him feel that he can have there the same religious liberty that he enjoys at home, and which he gives to his neighbour at home and you will have there a growing tree that will stand the storm, resist the influence of American ab-