

whatever ought in reason to be done the Provincial Legislature should itself do. The object of our people and their leaders and representatives in agreeing to the terms of Confederation was, to keep the schools of this Province out of the hands of the representatives of Lower Canada, now Quebec; and this we can only do by giving to the Separate Schools such legislation as is reasonable, or as may fairly be deemed reasonable.

Besides, it is for the common interest, that since we must have Separate Schools, machinery should be provided where necessary for making them as efficient as may be, and for enabling them to give a good education, at the expense of the Roman Catholics who wish to support them. I do not know what position Mr. Meredith means now to take in that respect. His party, in their desperation, seem to be urging him, as a matter of party tactics, to go for the repeal of all Separate School legislation and for leaving the law unamended as it stood at the time of Confederation; but in his address to his constituents in 1886 he felt called on, notwithstanding the "No-Popery" cry of the campaign, to make this admission:—

"The maintenance of the Separate School system of the Province is guaranteed to our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens under the Constitution. Some may regret that the necessity for its introduction existed, but it is nevertheless the duty of the Government honestly to administer it, and make it as efficient as possible, to the end that it may properly perform the functions for which it is designed."

All the amendments now assailed were made before the general election of 1886, and were discussed then, with the result that we have in the present Legislative Assembly of ninety members a majority of twenty-four, or not far from two to one. The only legislation since has been one short Act as to the form of Separate School debentures and by-laws, and no one, so far as I know, has ever suggested any objection to this Act.

In a memorandum of mine which was extensively circulated for the purpose of the election campaign of 1886, I asserted with respect to our amendments up to that time, that

"THEY WERE ALL JUST AND REASONABLE AMENDMENTS,"

and that "so they would appear when examined with candor and judgment." That was my deliberate opinion then, and I expressed it frankly, notwithstanding "the No-Popery" cry with which we were assailed. It would be dishonorable and dishonest of me, now that we are again assailed by the same groundless cry, to pretend to hold another opinion than I did then. I am still of