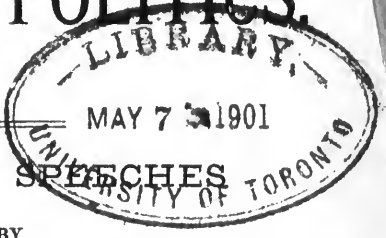


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# PROVINCIAL POLITICS.

1890.



REPORT OF THE SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY

(HON. MR. MOWAT,)

✓ HON. GEO. W. ROSS, - French School

(MR. EVANTUREL, M.P.P.)

IN THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

APRIL 3rd, 1890.

ON THE

**Proposed Amendments to the School Act in relation to  
the use of the French Language in the  
Public Schools.**

*Copies of this Speech can be had by addressing W. T. R. Preston  
Secretary Provincial Reform Association, Toronto.*

**Toronto :**

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1890.

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# FRENCH SCHOOLS.

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## SPEECH

DELIVERED BY THE

HON. GEO. W. ROSS,  
IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

APRIL 3rd, 1890,

*IN REPLY TO MR. T. D. CRAIG, MEMBER FOR EAST  
DURHAM.*

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The Minister of Education who rose at eleven o'clock amid hearty applause from his friends, began his reply with the remark that if the endorsation which the hon. gentleman predicted for his party were similar in character to that which he had received from his constituents, it would be quite satisfactory to this side of the House. (Government cheers.) Mr. Ross then proceeded to comment upon the importance of the question that had been thrust upon the House last year and this by his hon. friend. He had remarked last year, in reply to the hon. gentleman's strictures, that composed as we were in Canada, of different races and of different creeds, we should be careful not to arouse racial or creed differences which would imperil or disturb the harmony of feeling that should exist in a young country like Canada. He had emphasised this view and had endeavored to show that in the history of Great Britain and the United States, and several countries of Europe, they had abundant evidence that the way to build up a national sentiment and to unify a people was to be kind and tolerant to all races and creeds that recognised a common Government. He held that view still. It was the view of the Liberal party. He charged the hon. gentleman, intentionally or otherwise—he did not know which—with fomenting the race agitation that was at present disturbing the people of the country. Such an agitation was injurious to their well-being, and

the hon. gentleman's own constituents so fully recognised this fact that they were not prepared to send him back to the House again. (Cheers.)

#### RACE ANIMOSITY A CALAMITY.

He repeated that such a condition of things as the hon. gentleman would have brought about would be most calamitous to this young country. Just look at it. Canada was only 23 or 24 years of age, and one-third of its population was of French origin. What would be the effect on the million and a quarter of French people in Quebec, on the thousands of French people in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Manitoba, if the impression went abroad that there was anything like unkindness or unfairness, or any want of magnanimity on the part of Ontario in dealing with the race minority of the Province? Such a condition would be most disastrous from a national, and a religious standpoint. It was impossible to deprecate too strongly the views expressed by the hon. gentleman and by the press of his party. It would be most injurious to us as a young people if the discussions that went on from time to time in this House should have the effect—as he feared they already had to some extent—of creating religious and racial animosities. Carlyle said that “History is Philosophy teaching by experience.” Now let us briefly review the history of this question.

#### HISTORY OF FRENCH SCHOOLS.

French schools were established years ago in Essex, Prescott and Russell. The founder of our school system had to do with them as we had now. Everybody admitted the prudence and foresight and statesmanship in educational matters of the late Dr. Ryerson. Hon. gentlemen opposite were as loud in their eulogies of him as they were themselves. Did he deal harshly with them? Did he attempt to make English the only language in the schools? He gave them the fullest liberty as to the language to be used in the schools and as to the character of the teaching that should be permitted. He need hardly wait to point out how unfair it was for hon. gentlemen opposite to direct their attacks against him for what he had done, without a word of censure on Dr. Ryerson during the 30 years of his administration and without a word of censure on the four years' administration of John Sandfield Macdonald. He would not wait to dilate upon that, but would simply remark

that one of the best educators of the Continent—a man whose fame had crossed the seas—a man of eminent ability and forethought had permitted this system to grow up without any of the restrictions as to teachers, and text-books, and language, such as he had imposed. Dr. Ryerson had applied the same rule to German Schools as to French. His expectations were that the two races, surrounded as they would be by an overwhelming English majority, would become Anglicised by English teachers and English institutions, and that in this way a social revolution would take place, without any irritation or agitation whatsoever. Dr. Ryerson was wise in his time. Early in the history of Waterloo county there were nearly 100 schools in which German only was taught, and a large number of schools in Prescott and Russell in which French only was taught. The revolution which Dr. Ryerson desired had been accomplished so far as German Schools were concerned.

#### RESULT OF DR. RYERSON'S POLICY.

When he (Mr. Ross) came to deal with this question he found there were no German schools in which English was not taught, and only twenty-seven French schools in which there was no English taught. It was evident, therefore, that by Dr. Ryerson's calm and peaceable policy the schools were becoming anglicised. Now, this was true philosophy—it was the teaching of experience in Canada, and it was the teaching of experience elsewhere. Could his hon. friend say that the measure now proposed to the House would have brought about a better state of things than the silent growth resulting from social surroundings to which Dr. Ryerson trusted so much. As a philosopher,—if the hon. gentleman is a philosopher,—he will admit that the strongest force in national growth is that which works gradually and from within. There is a genius of action as well as a genius of waiting, and the genius of waiting is the rarer gift. Dr. Ryerson had this genius; he had the courage to wait and he lived to see a social revolution brought about without irritation or disaffection just because he had the courage to trust to the natural effect of the Anglo-Saxon institutions which surrounded the French and German people in Ontario. (Cheers.)

#### SHIRKING THE RESPONSIBILITY.

His hon. friend was very anxious to impress upon the House that he did not desire to raise a race cry. Was his hon. friend

sure that he had not raised a race cry already? Was he sure that his speech last year was not irritating and disturbing? (Hear, hear.) If he read the papers he would find that it was regarded by the French people as an attack upon their language, and he was sure the hon. gentleman would regret some day that he had made that speech and had projected in this country such a disturbing element. His hon. friend had said that the time given for the study of English in the schools of Prescott and Russell was not sufficient, and states that six hours a week was the time prescribed by the regulations. The hon. gentleman is quite mistaken as to the time recommended to be devoted to the study of English. In the instructions to the teachers of French schools issued in Sep., 1885, it was distinctly stated that *at least* two hours per week should be given to classes I and II, and four hours per week to classes III and IV, or twelve hours per week in all, and that circular was in the collection of papers he had on the desk in front of him. His hon. friend in his Bill proposed to allow one hour a day for the teaching of French. What evidence had the hon. gentleman that one hour was not too much in some cases and so limited a time in other cases as to be utterly useless? Could an arbitrary rule such as he proposed, be drawn successfully? He thought not. The instructions sent out by the Department in October last contained the only directions that a man with any pretensions to be an educator would adopt in dealing with this question. They said in effect that the teachers should be governed by the circumstances of the school. There might be circumstances under which half an hour would be sufficient; but the matter was one that might very well be left to the trustees. (Cheers.)

### *Bi-lingual Readers.*

There was one other matter to which he wished to refer before dealing with the Bill of his hon. friend, and that was the policy of the Government with respect to the Bi-lingual Readers. The leader of the Opposition in his London speech declared himself opposed to Bi-lingual Readers on the ground that their use would tend to perpetuate the French language. His hon. friend from East Durham, however, had said nothing with reference to that. The policy of the Government with regard to the use of Bi-lingual text-books had the highest sanction that a policy could have. Take for example the case of Wales. It had long been a grievance there that the children were unable to study Welsh in the elementary schools to the extent desired. The matter was inquired into by a Royal Commission,

who reported upon the subject last year, recommending the use of Bi-lingual readers in Wales. That Commission consisted of many distinguished men—Lord Cross, Lord Harrowby, Lord Northbrook, Sir John Lubbock, Canon Gregory, Canon Smith, Cardinal Manning, the Bishop of London, Dr. Dale, and others. In the code adopted by the Education Department in 1889, Bi-lingual readers were recommended for Welsh schools. He had therefore the sanction of the British Royal Commission for his policy and also the sanction of the Education Department of Great Britain.

#### POLICY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

The Scotch code of 1888 allows one shilling extra to be paid for every pupil in the elementary Reader who is partly taught by Gaelic teachers, and further, it allows Gaelic to be taught during the ordinary school hours either by the regular teachers or any person specially employed for the purpose. The code also provides for an examination of teachers in Gaelic reading, translation and composition.

The Commissioners on National Education in Ireland have authorised for the use of Irish schools a series of Bi-lingual Readers. From the annual report of 1888-9 of the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, it appears Irish was taught in 41 schools. Teachers are also subjected in certain cases to an examination in Irish-Gaelic, and an extra allowance is made by the Government for the pupils who pass a satisfactory examination in Irish. It will be seen, therefore, that the British Government, which has had some experience in forming a national character, so far from prohibiting the use of Welsh, Gaelic or Irish, rather encourages the study of these languages; and there was no complaint made, so far as he knew, because public funds were employed for this purpose. Surely the honorable gentleman is loyal enough to admit that the example of Great Britain is a reasonably safe example to follow.

#### POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES.

Then what do we gather from the United States? In order that there might be no doubt as to the policy of the Americans on this vexed question, he communicated with Mr. W. T. Harris, Chief of the Bureau of Education at Washington, from whose letter under date of February 8th, with the permission of the House, he would make a few quotations:

Department of the Interior,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.,

February 8, 1890.

*Hon. George W. Ross, Minister of Education, Toronto, Canada :*

MY DEAR SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ult., in which you request to be furnished a "statement showing the various States of the Union in which any other language (and what) than English is allowed by the law of the State or by usage to be taught in any of the elementary schools."

To enable me to answer respecting State laws, I have caused an examination to be made, and find that there is no legal provision, either prohibitive or permissive, of foreign languages in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The law expressly requires that the schools be taught in the English language in California, Colorado, Indiana, and Kansas.

Several States have special provisions, viz. :

Indiana.—German shall be introduced as a course of study in any schools where the parents of 25 or more pupils demand it.

Kentucky.—In any district where one-third of the pupils are children of other than English-speaking parents, their respective languages may be added to the course of study.

Maryland.—Where there is a considerable German population, school commissioners may cause German to be taught.

Ohio.—The School Board of any district shall cause the German language to be taught when a demand is made in writing by 75 resident freeholders representing 40 pupils.

With your permission I will add here the substance of a letter which I wrote on January 3rd to Mr. H. E. Clark, a member of your Legislature, in reference to permitting instruction in a foreign language in the Public Schools. I said :

"It is a subject on which I have decided convictions and much experience. It is the question of assimilating in the best manner a foreign element found in the community, either as the remnant of a once conquered people, like your Canadian French, or the residuum of a wave of immigration like the German population in our Northwestern States.

"I am decidedly in favor of a plan that has proved equal to the emergency in our Northwest. I inaugurated it in St. Louis, Mo. I gave instruction in the writing and speaking in the German language one lesson a day to all German pupils and to all Anglo-American pupils who desired to learn German. This provision was carried out in all schools where there were enough pupils to warrant the appointment of a teacher for a half or for a whole day. (By the word 'school,' as technically understood by us, is meant an organization under one head teacher assisted by from one to thirty assistant teachers, and having from one hundred to fifteen hundred pupils or more.) The result in St. Louis was to bring all German children into the Public Schools, and to break up entirely the private schools which had existed before. Many Anglo-American children availed themselves of the opportunity to learn German. A great advantage was found in this in the



fact that the feeling of caste was rapidly obliterated by the mutual respect engendered among the pupils by earnest efforts to learn each the other's native language.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I have no question that this is a policy that would have the same results in the French province in Canada. Teach them good Parisian French, and at the same time require them to learn the majority of their lessons in English, and the results would be soon to have an entire population of English-speaking people.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"W. T. HARRIS, *Commissioner.*"

This is the experience of one of the best educators in the United States and who was selected by President Harrison for the highest educational position in the gift in the Government.

#### THE GERMAN LANGUAGE.

On the same subject, Dr. Peaslee, late superintendent of Public Schools in Cincinnati in answer to the objection that the study of German should not be allowed, says :

"But," it is said, "this is America, and therefore, the English language only should be taught in the Public Schools ; teaching the German language tends to make our citizens less patriotic, less American." "Are," I ask, "Gen-Carl Schurz, Gen. Frank Sigel, and the tens of thousands of other Germans who fought in the Union Army, in the last war, any less true American citizens, any less patriotic, because they were educated in the German tongue ? Are our German fellow-citizens any less patriotic than the English whose mother tongue is that of our country, are the Germans in their native country, are the Germans in their native land any less devoted to the institutions of Germany, because the French language is taught in thousands of their schools ?" No one, I think, would answer these questions in the affirmative. And until they can be so answered it is idle to say, that a knowledge of, or the teaching of German or any other foreign language, is adverse to patriotism. The truth is, that our German fellow-citizens are noted for their attachment to the free institutions of America, and are among our most patriotic citizens, as a class much more so than the English."

#### THE FRENCH LANGUAGE.

Even French is permitted a place in the United States. The Legislature of Louisiana at its session in 1888 provided by Act No. 81,

"that the elementary branches may be taught in the French language in those parishes in the State or localities in said parishes where the French language predominates, if no additional expense is incurred."

Will the hon. gentleman contend that these American States are entirely wrong in their educational policy ? He will surely

admit that the Americans are a progressive and far seeing people and that in the last hundred years they have made gigantic strides as a nation. How did they assimilate the millions of German, French and Italian immigrants that settled within their borders during the present century? Was it by arbitrary legislation such as is advocated in certain quarters in this Province, or did they trust to the assimilating powers of the dominant race? (Cheers.)

#### POLICY IN EASTERN PROVINCES.

Then we have the example of other Provinces of the Dominion:—In New Brunswick the Bi-lingual Readers, which we have just authorised are used by 287 schools; in Nova Scotia by 73, and in P. E. I. by 33, and their use is recommended by some of the most prominent educationists in Manitoba. With such weighty precedents he (Mr. Ross) could not be far astray in recommending the introduction of the Bi-lingual Readers into the 98 schools in Ontario where the French language is spoken. Then, what is the situation in the Protestant English schools of Montreal? There the French language is compulsory in every form. On the 9th Sept., 1889, E. W. Arthy, Sec. of the Protestant Board of Commissioners, wrote him as follows:—

“The study of French is compulsory in every Department of the Protestant Public Schools of Montreal, except the preparatory classes of the Common Schools, which consist of infants 6 and 7 years old—who attend half the day only. No French is taught in these classes, but in all higher classes French is taught and the study is compulsory.”

What an example of tolerance and good sense is here presented to the hon. gentleman. The Protestant minority living in the midst of a French and Catholic community have such perfect confidence in the English language that they are not afraid of its being displaced even if their children do acquire a thorough mastery of French. (Cheers.)

#### ACTION BY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

It became his duty as soon as he took office to ask the House to consolidate the School Act and Regulations, and in dealing with the latter he proposed that English should be taught in every school in Ontario. The words of the regulations are as follows:—

“The programme of studies herein provided shall be followed by the teacher as far as the circumstances of his school permit. Any modifications

deemed necessary should be made only with the concurrence of the inspector and trustees. *In French and German Schools the authorized Readers should be used in addition to any text books in either of the languages aforesaid.*"

His hon. friend had said so many censorious things that one would have thought he had been living upon sour grapes during his absence last summer from Canada. He had nothing but bitter words for the government, the Attorney-General, and for himself (Mr. Ross). He was not magnanimous enough to spend one moment in paying him a single compliment for making English compulsory in all the schools of Ontario. Why this want of generosity; surely it cannot be necessary for purely party purposes to be ungenerous towards an opponent. What is the hon. gentleman to gain by declining to recognize what the country knows to be the case, what every member of this House knows to be the fact, that he (Mr. Ross) was the first to make the study of English in every school the unmistakable policy of the Education Department. In the face of such conduct on the part of the hon. gentleman, he must not be surprised if he is told he is not the exponent of a broad policy, but is the representative of partizanship and intolerance in its most contemptible form. The hon. gentleman says that the regulations of the Education Department are inoperative, are disregarded and would be disregarded in the future. What justification has he for the statement? Does not the correspondence before the House show that the number of schools in which English was not taught is steadily decreasing since 1885, the date of the regulations? that while in 1887 there were 27 departments in which no English was taught, in 1888 there were only 6, and in 1889 English was taught in every school. What did the Commissioners say on this point? After having visited every school in which French was taught in Prescott and Russell, they say:—

- I. That some English is taught in every school.
- II. That the Ontario Readers have been introduced into every school.
- III. That the pupils are usually well supplied with English reading books.
- IV. That in at least twelve schools the work done in English is much beyond the amount prescribed.
- V. That in 24 schools more time is given to English than that prescribed in the circular; in 6 the time prescribed is given, and in 23 less than the time prescribed is given.
- VI. That in very few schools has sufficient attention been given to colloquial exercises.

#### MISTATEMENT CORRECTED.

The hon. gentleman argues on the assumption that he (Mr. Ross) had said that every pupil was learning English and learn-

ing it thoroughly. He never made such a statement. He was aware that English was not taught to every pupil. He was not aware nor had he assumed that English was well taught in every instance. The words he used on that occasion were:—

“It is not to be assumed that English is as well taught in the schools of Eastern Ontario as in some of the older counties. Due allowance must be made for local conditions in considering a matter of this kind. In fact, in a Province extending over an area so great, no fair comparison can be made, at least between counties remote from each other. There are poor schools even in the older counties; there are poor schools in the northern parts of the counties of Frontenac, Hastings, Haliburton, &c., and to say that some of the schools in Prescott and Russell are in a backward condition is merely to assert what perhaps may be said of many schools in the county of York, or Middlesex, or Oxford.”

It had become the practice of hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the House to quote very largely from newspapers. There were a great many reports last year as to the condition of the schools in Prescott and Russell. They had reports from the *Mail* and the *Telegram*, and there was some uncertainty as to the true condition of affairs, and he felt it was desirable, in the face of so many conflicting statements, that he should know authoritatively how matters stood. The hon. gentleman said they were compelled to appoint a Commission to inquire into the condition of the Prescott and Russell schools. The hon. gentleman never made a greater mistake. They were compelled by their sense of duty, by their desire to ascertain the truth, just as they had appointed Commissioners to inquire into other matters. They were anxious that there should be no doubt as to the true facts in the case and the Commission was appointed accordingly.

#### HIGH CHARACTER OF COMMISSION.

The Commission consisted of Rev. Prof. Reynar, of Victoria College; the Rev. D. D. McLeod, of Barrie, and Mr. J. J. Tilley, men of the highest standing in their various walks in life—and men who could not be approached with a view to influencing their judgment; and he ventured to say they had not prepared a partial or biased report. The hon. gentleman says—reiterating a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition in his London speech,—that the Commissioners were very anxious to shield the Minister of Education.

What right has the hon. gentleman to impugn the character of these Commissioners? Two of them are leading men in their respective denominations, one a Methodist and one a Presbyterian.

They were selected because of their experience, education and their high standing as citizens. Because they did their duty, because their report contained the facts as they found them and because these facts did not serve the purpose of the hon. gentleman, he is unkind enough to intimate that they were partial and unfair and tried to shield the Minister of Education. The opinion which he seems to have formed of their report is at variance with the one formed by competent judges elsewhere. For instance :

*The Canadian Baptist* said "This evidently impartial report, while it does not perhaps add largely to the information already possessed by those who have followed up the discussion in the Legislature and in the press, will be of great service as giving, in concise form, a reliable basis for inference and action. Most unprejudiced persons will, we think, agree that the recommendations of the commission are eminently judicious. They include about all the action that seems necessary and desirable."

*The Canadian Presbyterian* said, "As was to be expected from men of their character and standing, they did their work with diligence, thoroughness and impartiality. Their report has just been issued and it is strictly correct to say that it is untinged by political coloring. The report is valuable because it presents a clear and unbiassed statement of the actual state of affairs in these schools dominated, as they largely are, by French Roman Catholic influences; it will also, doubtless, lead to the adoption of the corrections necessary to preserve the integrity and usefulness of the Public School system in Ontario."

*The Presbyterian Review* said, "With the report we are much pleased. It is full, carefully prepared and clear. The Commissioners have done their work well, and we are happy to agree to the recommendations they make."

*The Christian Guardian* said, "As far as we can judge, the Commissioners have done their work with great thoroughness and fairness."

*The Toronto Mail* said, "On the whole the Commissioners appear to have done their work thoroughly and conscientiously."

*The Ottawa Citizen* (Tory) said, "It was hinted in some quarters that the report of the Commissioners appointed by the Ontario Department of Education to investigate the condition of the Public Schools of the Province in counties where the French-Canadian population is numerous would prove a whitewashing one, and that the object aimed at would not be attained; but a careful examination of the report, briefly summarized in yesterday's Citizen, shows that the Commissioners performed the duty assigned to them in a most careful and thorough manner."

The hon. gentleman claimed that a Conservative should have been on the Commission. Why? Did the hon. gentleman seriously contend that the truth was only to be obtained from Conservatives? (Hear, hear.)

#### FRENCH AND GERMAN SCHOOLS.

The hon. gentleman brought him to task for having said in his speech in Toronto last June, that the German schools were pre-

cisely in the same condition as the French schools, and in answer to this invention of his own brain, he quotes from the report of the Commissioners to show that there was no similarity in the condition of the two schools. What led him to this conclusion no one could tell. The words used by him (Mr. Ross) on that occasion were—

“I come next to consider that most disturbing of all questions—French and German schools—and I bracket these two because every objection that applies to one applies to the other. From an Anglo-Saxon standpoint they are both foreign languages, and national characteristics have very little to do with the question.”

He was then discussing the French and German schools from a racial standpoint. He argued that if French was a foreign language so was German, and that Anglo-Saxonizing was as much a necessity in the one case as the other. He was discussing the question whether under certain circumstances it was not desirable and proper that French should be used as a language of instruction in addition to English, so as to teach the French children English through French, just as German children would be taught English through German. From a national standpoint they were in the same position. It was natural that the French child who learned French should be taught English through the medium of that language, just as a German or Gaelic child should be taught English through the instrumentality of his native language.

#### MR. CRAIG'S PLAGIARISM.

He came now particularly to the Bill introduced by the hon. gentleman, and first he would mention that every clause in it which is of any value was stolen from the regulations of the Education Department, and those that were not so stolen were worse than useless. By the first section of his Bill he declares that English shall be the language of every Public and Separate School in this Province. Where did he get this section? As everybody knows, he got this from the Regulations of August, 1885, amplified by the Regulations of the 10th of February last as follows:—

“(13) It shall be the duty of the teacher to conduct every exercise and recitation from the text-books prescribed for Public Schools, in the English language, and all communication between teacher and pupil in regard to matters of discipline and in the management of the school shall be in English, except so far as this is impracticable by reason of the pupil not understanding English. Recitations in French or German may be conducted in the language of the text-book.”

By sec. 3 of his bill he provides that no teacher is to be employed or permitted to teach unless he is capable of speaking the English language. Another case of petty larceny, as the following Regulation of the Education Department passed in 1885 provided for an examination in English and covers the same ground.

155. In addition to the examination conducted in the French or the German language, every candidate for a teacher's certificate shall be required to pass such examinations in English grammar and in translation from French or German into English, as may be prescribed by the Board of Examiners.

By sec. 4 of his bill the teacher may use any language understood by the pupils in imparting instruction in all cases where the pupils do not understand English. This section was also stolen from the Regulations of the Department, and is strangely at variance with the statement made by the hon. gentleman last year.

On the 9th of March, 1889, as reported by the *Empire*, he (Mr. Craig) said :—

"He had shown that the situation was a very serious one. Were they willing to have two languages in this Province? In the Public Schools of Ontario, if such were not the desire of the people, the English language only should be taught." \* \* \* \* \* "He did not wish to speak a word against the French language, but as this was essentially an English speaking Province, they could only have one language in their Public Schools. That was the great proposition which he wished to lay down."

What has become of the GREAT proposition laid down by the hon. gentleman last year? It has vanished into thin air.

By sec. 6, the teacher who violated the provisions of the hon. gentleman's bill, should it become law, is to be dismissed apparently without judge or jury. This clause was not stolen from the regulations of the Department. By sec. 7 the use of French is to be allowed for one hour per day, until Parliament enacts otherwise. So we are going to postpone the great panacea of the hon. gentleman for making us a united people until Parliament gets ready. Why such procrastination. By sec. 8 the privilege of using the French language in the instruction of pupils who know no English is to be withdrawn absolutely, in case the provisions of the hon. gentleman's bill are wilfully violated. If a teacher violated this section the children would be deprived of instruction in French altogether, and consequently would not be taught at all. He would visit upon the heads of the children, not the sins of their fathers—that would be according to Scripture—but the sins of the Board of Trustees. Such a measure could not be passed

through any legislative body anywhere, not even in Japan. (Applause.) One serious omission in the bill, in spite of all the stolen sections it contained, was that it made no provision for the training of teachers in English. This omission he regarded as fundamental. The Commissioners strongly recommended the establishment of a training school for French teachers. How were we to introduce English into the schools, except through the medium of teachers qualified to use it properly in the school-room?

#### BILL MUST BE REJECTED.

He asked the House to reject the second reading of the Bill, and in so doing he hoped that the last had been heard of this question. If they were going to keep before their minds the purpose of those who founded Confederation, it would not do to have the public agitated by discussions that fostered a cleavage between French and English. The French had been as loyal to Canada as any other portion of the population. They had defended it against attack from within and without, and we had a right to respect their language and even their prejudices, for were they not our own kith and kin? If they would build up here a great nation they must look beyond the narrow horizon of a school section, or of a few counties, or even beyond the horizon of the Dominion itself, and the further they looked the more they found the policy of the Government sustained by the great countries of the world. It was that policy which had helped to make England the mistress of the seas, which had enabled Switzerland for centuries to maintain herself in her Alpine retreat, and which had helped Germany and Austria, in spite of internal strife and conflicts with other nations, to become two of the great Powers of Europe. Such a policy, too, would help to build up a great nation in Ontario and in Canada. (Applause.)

Mr. Meredith replied to the Minister of Education and was followed by the Attorney-General:—

#### THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The Attorney-General, on rising shortly before two o'clock, was greeted with loud cheers. He said that at that late hour it would not be becoming on his part to occupy the attention of the House very long, nor did the speech of his hon. friend, heated although it was and excited, and impassioned as its delivery no doubt was, contain much that required an answer. It was absurd for the leader of the Opposition to say that the Government did not desire the French population to learn English. If his hon. friend



really seriously meant any such statement as that he must be pretty nearly approaching absolute idiocy. (Cheers and laughter.) His hon. friend was not in that position—he knew very well how the matter really was, but he thought just now it was in the interest of his party to represent things as being different to what they were. The Government were as anxious as he was to see their French fellow-subjects speak the English language; but the difficulty was how to bring about that result. The plan proposed by his hon. friend was a very bad one, and if carried into effect, not more English would be learned, but less. The Government wanted English to be learned by the French portion of the population, but they wanted them also to be friends. Nothing could be gained by proscribing the French language in the schools, but a great deal was to be gained if they recognised to a certain extent the use of that language in the schools. The French population contributed to the support of the schools, and the object sought could be secured a thousand times more effectually by respecting their prejudices, by respecting their love for their language, by respecting their desire that their children should be taught their own tongue, than by adopting a coercive policy. (Cheers.) He wanted the French children to learn their language, to study their language, to read books in their language, and he wanted them all to study the language and literature of England. His hon. friend had said that he could not imagine what the policy of the Government was, and challenged him (the Attorney-General) to tell him their policy. The hon. gentleman could be very obtuse when he wanted to be obtuse. The Minister of Education had already appealed to the “Instructions for Teachers” for the purpose of showing what their policy was. The member for London had read those instructions, and after reading them it was absurd for him to pretend that he did not know what the policy of the Government was. The hon. the Attorney-General then went through the instructions seriatim as regards the use of French in the schools and the directions for the teaching of English, pointing out that the French children were not to study French only but to study English also. The policy of the Government was to have English taught in the schools, and to adopt the best methods of teaching it and the best methods of educationists elsewhere had been adopted. There no doubt was in some counties a scarcity of teachers qualified to teach English, and the Government wanted to remove that state of things as speedily as possible. The Government recognised the necessity for doing something, and were taking steps to provide teachers where that scarcity existed. The Government were anxious to have children thoroughly trained in English, and with that object in view they were adopting the methods that experience had proved to be the best. The object aimed at could never be accomplished by exhibiting a spirit of hostility to the French population—certainly not by proscribing the use of French in the schools. The Attorney-General quoted from correspondence previously used by him in his recent speech at Woodstock to show that Dr. Ryerson and the whole Council of Public Instruction had regarded the use of French in the French Schools in the East much as they regarded the use of English in the English Public Schools, and showed how this condition had gradually changed until the recent regulations of the Education Department had been issued, by which English was to be thoroughly taught and teachers thoroughly trained in English in every school in these counties. (Loud applause.)

*Mr. Evanturel.*

It was nearly half-past two o'clock when the Attorney-General ceased speaking. Mr. Evanturel rose for a moment and expressed his regret that

the lateness of the hour precluded his continuing the debate, and correcting the numerous inaccuracies which, he said, the speeches of Mr. Meredith and Mr. Craig contained. He felt bound, however, to point out to the hon. gentlemen that this "syllabaire," which he and Mr. Craig had condemned so vehemently on account of its alleged Roman Catholic teaching and prayers, did not contain one single Roman Catholic prayer or doctrine. If the hon. gentleman had been able to read French they would have seen this, and the fact that such a circumstance had escaped the attention of two Toronto University graduates who had examined the little volume lowered his estimate of the Provincial University by fifty per cent. He would have been happy to translate the whole contents of the volume for the benefit of the House if the hour had been earlier. (Cheers.)

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## MEMORANDUM.

Since the delivery of Mr. Ross' speech the *Empire* has published what appears to be an official report of what Mr. Craig said in the debate on French Schools. In order that all matters in dispute might be fully covered, the following supplementary observations are appended. Mr. Craig made a special effort to fasten upon Mr. Ross the charge of misrepresentation if not falsification in connection with the French Schools. The first statement made by Mr. Ross in his speech last year which Mr. Craig challenged was as follows :

He (Mr. Ross) denied that the schools of Eastern Ontario were inferior in the sense described by the member for East Durham. The reports of the inspectors go to show that these schools are doing excellent work, even French pupils beating English pupils at departmental examinations. The member for East Durham should have informed himself on the condition of the schools of Eastern Ontario before making a charge that they were not in an efficient condition.

In L'Orignal English is taught, and there could not be any complaint with respect to the teaching of English in the schools in the extreme eastern part of the province.

*Answer.*

The information on which this statement was based is contained in Mr. Summerby's report (Sessional Paper, No. 48, 1887) and is as follows :

To give you an idea of the character of work done in English, in some of our French Schools, I may here draw your attention to the fact that I mentioned to you when I was in Toronto last month. Four pupils from one of these schools passed the Entrance examination to the High School during the year 1886, one in July and three in December. All four of these pupils speak and write both languages ; two of them are the children of French speaking parents ; two of them English-speaking parents, and one of them is but eleven years of age. One of the French pupils made a perfect paper in dictation, spelling every word correctly and beating all the English-speaking pupils.

In the western part of the inspectorate there are no High Schools, and advanced work must be done in the Public Schools, or pupils wishing to go forward in their studies have to leave home to attend school. Some of our pupils attend High Schools in adjoining counties, and as in some of these schools medals and scholarships are awarded pupils taking the highest marks at the Entrance examination, we have thus a means of comparing our work with that done in neighboring counties. Several times of late years our pupils have taken gold and silver medals at the Kemptville High School, and they have also taken scholarships at Ottawa Collegiate Institute.

In some of our Public Schools pupils are prepared for the teachers' examinations. During the past two years several have passed district examinations; three the third class examination, and one the second class examination. The second class candidate was but fourteen years of age and had passed the third class examination the previous year.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed)

W. J. SUMMERBY.

"SCHOOL INSPECTOR'S OFFICE,

"January 4th, 1888.

SIR,—At the beginning of last year I asked my assistant, Mr. Dufort, to pay special attention to this subject (English) when making his inspectorial visits. The result is that we have reduced the number of purely French departments from twenty-seven to six, and I hope to be able to report, at the end of the present term, that these six have fallen into line. At last summer's examination for teachers for our French schools, all candidates totally ignorant of English were rejected. I do not wish it to be thought that I am satisfied with our present attainments in this respect. As I have said in previous reports, our weak point is a staff of teachers having an imperfect acquaintance with the English tongue. But I think we are going forward as rapidly as can be expected under the circumstances.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Yours truly,

"W. J. SUMMERBY.

"RUSSELL, 23rd February, 1889.

"DEAR SIR,—Last year I had to report that we had six schools in which English was not taught. Mr. Dufort has made a verbal report to me that these six fell into line during 1888, so that we can now say that English is taught in every Public School in the counties.

"Yours truly,

"W. J. SUMMERBY.

"CURRAN, 25th February, 1889.

"SIR,—Last year according as I made my first visits I insisted on all the teachers that they had to teach English, and also explained to trustees and parents the necessity of having it taught. The result is that I now have the pleasure of stating that English is taught in all the schools more or less.

"Your obedient servant,

"O. DUFORT,

"Assistant I. P. S.

The statements of the Inspectors were confirmed by the Commissioners, as the following extracts will show:

"I. That some English is taught in every school.

"II. That the Ontario Readers have been introduced into every school.

"III. That the pupils are usually well supplied with English reading books.

“There can be no question as to the fact that in all the French schools in the several counties visited, notwithstanding particular cases of backwardness or inefficiency, an effort is being made to impart a knowledge of the English language; and not only so, but this work is receiving a larger amount of attention at present than in former years. There are some of these schools in which English has been well taught for many years, so that they are practically English schools. There are also some, as will be seen from the statistical statement forming part of this report, in which the English language is largely used in the work of the school. This is the case more particularly in the counties of Essex and Kent.”

### *Unauthorized Text Books.*

Mr. Craig states that Mr. Ross denies that unauthorized books were used in the schools in Eastern Ontario. Mr. Ross never made such a denial, on the contrary, as reported in the *Mail*, he made the following admission:—

“There was a certain violation of the Regulations of the Department in the French Schools in Eastern Ontario in that they used French text-books not authorized but books authorized for mixed schools in Quebec. He had obtained in the French language those used in the Maritime Provinces and had sent them to the Central Committee for report. The prospect was, therefore, that in a short time they would have French text-books as undenominational as were the books used in the Public Schools.”

From beginning to end the reports of the speech show that what Mr. Ross said was true and is true, and that nothing has been disclosed by the Commissioners, or by any other evidence submitted so far, to show that his statements were inaccurate.

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## REGULATIONS OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT,

### RESPECTING FRENCH AND GERMAN SCHOOLS.

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*Approved, February 10th, 1890.*

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(1) In school sections where the French or German language prevails, the trustees, with the approval of the Inspector, may, in addition to the course of study prescribed for Public Schools, require instruction to be given in reading, grammar and composition to such pupils as are directed by their parents or guardians to study either of these languages, and in all such cases the authorized text-books in French or German shall be used.

(2) It shall be the duty of the teacher to conduct every exercise and recitation from the text books prescribed for Public Schools, in the English language, and all communications between teacher and pupil in regard to matters of discipline and in the management of the school shall be in English, except so far as this is impracticable by reason of the pupil not understanding English. Recitations in French or German may be conducted in the language of the text-book.

(3) It shall be the duty of the Inspector to examine carefully in English every pupil according to the course of studies prescribed for Public Schools; but he shall be at liberty to use his own discretion as to what explanations he will give in any other language that appears to be better known by the pupil. The standard of efficiency recognized in Public Schools where the English language only is taught shall be the standard for French and German schools, reasonable allowance being made for pupils whose mother tongue is French or German. The Inspector shall report at once to the Education Department any school in which the regulations respecting the study and use of English are disregarded by the teacher or trustees.

(4) In counties where there is a scarcity of teachers qualified to teach English, the Board of Examiners for the county, with the approval of the Education Department, may establish a Model School for the special training of French or German teachers. Such schools shall hold two sessions each year, and shall, in addition to the ordinary professional course required for County Model Schools, give a full literary course in English in all the subjects prescribed for Third Class Teachers' Certificates, or for District Certificates, as the Board may direct. The final examination for certificates to teach, shall be conducted in the English language. There shall also be a final examination in the French or German language, in reading, grammar and composition. Boards of Examiners shall possess all the powers with respect to such schools as they now possess with respect to County Model Schools. The Regulations governing the inspection of County Model Schools by the County and Departmental Inspector shall apply to these schools.

(5) Emblems of a denominational character shall not be exhibited in a public school during regular school hours.

