

ation, the different conferences that were held in the different provinces, the geographical positions and the question of the upper and lower Houses, went on to say:

He would now endeavour to speak somewhat fully as to one of the most important questions, perhaps the most important—that could be confided to the legislature—the question of education. This was a question in which in Lower Canada they must all feel the greatest interest, and in respect to which more apprehension might be supposed to exist in the minds at any rate of the Protestant population than in regard to anything else connected with the whole scheme of federation. It must be clear that a measure would not be favourably entertained by the minority of Lower Canada which would place the education of their children and the provision for their schools wholly in the hands of a majority of a different faith. It was clear that in confiding the general subject of education to the local legislature it was absolutely necessary it should be accompanied with such restrictions as would prevent injustice in any respect from being done to the minority. (Hear, hear.) Now, this applied to Lower Canada, but it also applied and with equal force to Upper Canada and the other provinces; for in Lower Canada there was a Protestant minority and in the other provinces a Roman Catholic minority. The same privileges belonged to the one of right here as belonged to the other of right elsewhere. There could be no greater injustice to a population than to compel them to have their children educated in a manner contrary to their religious belief.

In conclusion he said:

He hoped and believed when the question came up in parliament for disposal the legislature would rescue the Lower Canadian institutions for superior education from the difficulties in which they now stood; and this remark applied both to Roman Catholic and Protestant institutions. (Hear.)

The speech as here reported is copiously interlarded with cries of 'hear, hear' applause and cheers. And although there may be very few living to-day who were present on that occasion, I feel satisfied that the descendants of the men who then cheered when Mr. Galt urged the rights of the Protestant minority will not oppose a measure asking for the Catholic minority of the west, the same privileges which their own co-religionists extended to the Protestant minority in the province of Quebec at confederation.

Mr. J. D. REID (Grenville). Mr. Speaker, before casting my vote on this important question I wish to state my position and as the hour is late I shall endeavour to do so in as few words as possible. The hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Maclean), who spoke last on the government side of the House, undertook to criticise the opposition for lack of discipline and unity, but, I venture to think that in this respect the opposition side of the House compares very favourably with the government supporters.

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Does the hon. member for Lunenburg remember that when the Prime Minister first introduced this Bill with so much gusto, he declared he would stand or fall by the measure, and does he not see that the Prime Minister has since then experienced a complete change of front. What was the position of the party at the back of the premier after he introduced that Bill? Was there discipline and unity in the party? Is it not a fact that the first man to fall out of line was the ex-Minister of Interior (Mr. Sifton). So serious was the matter that he resigned his portfolio. Then, what about the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding)? Was he not following immediately in the footsteps of the ex-Minister of the Interior? Is it not a fact that for several days he was, as it were, walking the plank, or intending to follow the ex-Minister of the Interior? Then, what about the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa)? Does it not appear from the remarks he is making in different parts of the country at the present time that that hon. member does not agree with the Prime Minister? If the Prime Minister had given the members on his side of the House the same latitude that the hon. leader of the opposition gave to members on this side, and allowed every man to vote and act as his conscience dictated, this Bill would not go through the House in the form that I suppose it is now going. The hon. member for Lunenburg also referred to the position of the Montreal 'Star' and the Montreal 'Gazette,' and said that we should get them into line. He referred to Conservative newspapers as not being in accord with the leader of the Conservative party on this question. At the same time, I thought he would have been kind enough to have referred to the Toronto 'Globe,' and explained to us why it was not in unity with the Liberal party. I mention these facts to show that the Liberal party are not at all in unity on this Bill. The hon. gentleman also stated that the Conservative party were without a leader or a policy. I have been in this House since the year 1891, and have sat here with several leaders of the different parties since that time, and I do not believe that we have ever had a leader of the Conservative party with greater ability or more respected throughout this country than the present leader of the Conservative party. I believe that the Conservative party under the leadership of the hon. member for Carleton would have been in power to-day had it not been for the way the Liberal party stuffed the lists in Manitoba, the Northwest and other provinces, stuffed the ballot boxes, used bogus ballot boxes, used a large amount of money which was subscribed by the Grand Trunk Pacific, and promised or pledged contracts under the Grand Trunk Pacific previous to the last general election. The hon. member also said that the hon. leader of the