

over their backs, and have been brought to the centre with a round turn and made to support the Prime Minister notwithstanding the fact that they know when they are doing so that the people who sent them to this parliament are opposed to this measure, and that in supporting this measure they are not consulting the wishes of their constituents. But they are taking chances and they hope that in five years the grass may grow over this question, but I mistake the sentiment of the people if in five years it is not as fresh as it is to-day. What was the history of the Conservative party in 1896? For whom was the Conservative party fighting in 1896? They were fighting a fight for the Roman Catholic minority in the province of Manitoba.

Sir Charles Tupper took the life of the Conservative party in his hands, and went down and out fighting the battle of the Roman Catholic minority of the province of Manitoba. What was the cry of the Conservative party in 1896? It was: 'Minority rights.' And what was the cry of the present Prime Minister and his party? He cry was: 'Hands off Manitoba; No coercion; Provincial rights.' And I desire to say that the question in issue then was entirely different from the question before us to-day. The province of Manitoba had passed an Act giving the Roman Catholics of that province certain rights. And they afterwards repealed the law they had passed. The minority appealed the new law to the highest court, and that court said they must go to the Dominion authorities for a remedial order. The position to-day is entirely different. We are dealing with a wholly new situation. There is no legislation, I contend, to interfere with the granting of a constitution to these new provinces. The hon. member for Centre York (Mr. Campbell) a few moments ago quoted a passage of the British North America Act referring to provinces coming into the union. I claim that what is meant by that is the provinces that were coming into the union at that time—1867, the provinces referred to being Ontario and Quebec. And in 1895 that was the opinion of the Toronto 'Globe' and I believe it is their opinion still. Here is what the 'Globe' said on April 11th, 1895:

It was one of the conditions of confederation that there should be separate schools in Ontario for Catholics and for Protestants in Quebec.

Let us attend to our own affairs; we want no Ottawa legislation to set Ontario right. This is our position with reference to Manitoba. We approve of our own system, but we do not desire to see it forced upon another province. We oppose, not separate schools, but federal interference with provincial affairs.

So, they evidently thought that this referred to provinces coming into the Dominion at the time of confederation, and not to

provinces to come in fifty years afterwards. On April 16th, 1895 the 'Globe' said:

The British North America Act also provides that no provincial law 'shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the province at the union.' The effect is that so far as Ontario and Quebec are concerned there is an absolute guarantee for the continuance of separate schools for the minority. There would be no need for an application for remedial legislation to enforce the guarantee, though there might be such an application to restore some additional right or privilege which had been granted after the union and afterwards withdrawn.

So, the opinion of the 'Globe' very clearly is that this refers to provinces that were entering confederation at the time of the union and not to provinces in the Northwest Territories that we are now taking in. And I believe, that, beyond doubt, that is the proper interpretation of the law.

The right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) took an entirely different view of the position in 1896 from that which he takes now. He was riding up and down the province of Ontario and Manitoba, in company with the late Dalton McCarthy and other distinguished gentlemen who were members of the Conservative party at that time, some of them very prominent Orangemen, though Orangemen are now so abused by hon. gentlemen opposite. One was the late Mr. N. Clarke Wallace. I think we might safely say that the right hon. gentleman while in Manitoba and Ontario was riding the Protestant horse. I do not know whether it was the proverbial white horse or not, but it was evidently the Protestant horse. And in Quebec he was saying to the people: Trust Laurier; he is one of your own race and religion. And the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick) was signing letters to the bishops telling what he would do in connection with the remedial legislation. So, it was one game in Quebec and another game in Ontario, and by this means the right hon. gentleman won power. We were told in Ontario that it was a fight between the hon. gentleman and the clergy of Quebec. Yet, hon. gentlemen opposite now say that we are intolerant and that we speak disrespectfully of the clergy. But I say there has never been a word of that kind on this side of the House. These expressions came from the right hon. gentleman's party in 1896, when they said that the priests and bishops of Quebec were going to excommunicate the members of the Church who did not support Tupper. In that way he appealed to the ultra Protestant electors and thereby had many members of his party elected. Though the cry of hon. gentlemen opposite in 1896 was: 'Hands off Manitoba,' their guiding principle was party expediency—anything for power. And party expediency is the controlling influence with them to-day. They