

constitution in that respect. Have we not seen, during a period of ten years in the province of Ontario, a great political organization such as that of the Conservative party under the guidance of a distinguished gentleman like Mr. Meredith loudly demand that separate schools be abolished, in spite of the constitution. Under those circumstances, I cannot conceive how hon. gentlemen may hope to enlist our aid in support of a policy which would be the death blow to our race.

As for us, we have always acted in a totally different way towards those of our fellow-citizens who speak another tongue. Nevertheless, it has been insinuated in this House, by the hon. member for North Toronto, I believe, that if the Protestant minority in Quebec was fairly dealt with, it was because we were compelled to do so under the constitution. Nothing could be false.

As early as 1865, Sir George Etienne Cartier took pleasure in pointing out the breadth of mind of his fellow-countrymen in order to satisfy the people of the other provinces that our record was a guarantee for the future, and that the minority would always have in the province of Quebec its share of justice, and liberty. In 1890, at the time of the discussion of Mr. McCarthy's Bill for the abolition of the French language in the Northwest Territories, Sir John A. Macdonald gave us credit for a spirit of toleration. And in 1889 or 1890, when certain firebrands attempted to make trouble about the settlement of the question relating to the Jesuits' estate, effected by Mr. Mercier, Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière, a Protestant, whom the French Canadian Liberals had carried to power, in 1878, in spite of the Protestant population itself, Sir Henri Joly went through Ontario to show in what manner the Protestant minority was dealt with. In fact, we are not only tolerant, but tolerant and generous to the extreme, as was recognized by the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher). The hon. member for Beauce (Mr. Bédard) has shown that in eleven counties in the province of Quebec, where French Catholics are in the majority, Protestant members are elected. Besides, in the Senate, in the judiciary, in municipal councils, everywhere in fact, the Protestant English-speaking population receives more than its share from the hands of the people. See how liberal we are: in 1898 some members of the Quebec legislature, and amongst them English-speaking Protestants, wanted that our legislative council be abolished as a means of relieving the bad state of the provincial finances. Some English-speaking members objected to this on the ground that the legislative council, was, in their opinion, a safeguard for the minority. The great majority of the members took their wish into account and the legislative council was maintained solely for that reason.

Such is the way in which our Protestant fellow-citizens are dealt with by us. No-

thing in the constitution compels us to grant them a larger number of senators, a larger proportion of public money, a larger number of judges, of municipal councillors, a greater proportion of patronage, than their numbers entitle them to. However, we take pleasure, in the interest of harmony and of union, to act liberally towards them in that respect.

And when we venture to ask for Catholics in the Northwest, not, indeed such generous treatment, but merely the same school law as that enjoyed by the Protestant minority of Quebec, we are threatened with a general ransacking of the country, we are threatened with extermination by the bayonet, as suggested by the hon. member for Victoria and Haliburton. We are even threatened with the breaking up of confederation. Let us put to shame these men who fan the flame of racial hatred. Let them read once more the testimony of one of their accredited representatives, the Hon. Mr. Weir who spoke as follows in Montreal, on March 24 last:

I, the son of Scotch parents and a Protestant, have always, in this province, seen our rights respected, and I challenge any one of them to say that he has been unfairly dealt with by Catholics.

So, when, in the province of Ontario, we hear politicians raising the cry of race and religion in order to prevent citizens of the Northwest Territories from enjoying as we do, and as the people of Ontario do, rights to which they are entitled logically and under the constitution, should we not cry out shame to them and stigmatize them with our wrath? Have not the citizens of the Northwest the same right as they have, and as we have, to bring up their children as they think fit?

Strange coincidence, on every occasion since 1867, when the recognition of our rights as a minority has been, to our mind, unjustly opposed, it has always been by means of amendments advocating the maintenance of provincial rights, and exactly similar to that moved by the leader of the opposition, in spite of the assurance given by the fathers of confederation that the Dominion government would always be a protector of minorities. In 1872 and 1875, at the time the New Brunswick school question was being discussed, 1875, in the Senate, against the clause establishing separate schools in the Northwest; in 1890, at the time of the discussion of Mr. McCarthy's Bill for the abolition of the French language in the Northwest, amendments similar to that moved by the leader of the opposition were introduced, so exactly similar, in fact, that I wonder whether the hon. member has not copied them verbatim.

Exception is taken to separate schools in the Northwest because that system, it is contended, has not dispelled ignorance in the province of Quebec. The hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) has pointed out some of the causes which have delayed the progress of education among the French Canadians. Let me add what follows: