

tion made no declaration of policy in the course of his whole speech. His words were :

I argue not for separate schools; I argue not against separate schools: let the constitution take its course.

Sir, as I conceive the responsibility which rests upon the leader of the Conservative party, owing to the declaration which Sir John Thompson made in 1894, the leader of the opposition in arguing thus did not discharge his duty. And as to this argument of the leader of the opposition I differ just as strongly with it, as I am opposed to the contention of the Prime Minister that the constitution required him to pass this legislation. I quite conceive that the declaration of the Prime Minister was based upon, not only the legal obligation, but upon the moral obligation as well, yet even so I cannot agree with him. I venture respectfully to say, that the conclusion that one must come to is, that if we are to dispose of this question properly and to accept our responsibilities, in the true spirit, there should be a declaration from both parties as to their policy on this question. There should be a declaration as to whether you are prepared to say: As a matter of policy, as a matter of fairness, as a matter of justice, these provinces should be deprived of the exclusive right to manage their own educational system, or, if you are not prepared to say that or to controvert it, then, you are not discharging the responsibilities which rest upon you. It is very easy for the leader of the opposition to say: Let the constitution take its course. That standard is broad enough to cover every member of this House. I hope there are none here who are not prepared to abide by the law and the constitution, but at all events the Conservative party in this country cannot get united under that banner, and cannot subscribe to the device written on it. We have heard from three or four of the gentlemen opposite that they are not prepared to come under that standard. The hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron), the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk), two of the Conservative leaders from the province of Quebec, have told us that they are going to support the government on this issue and that they will not subscribe to the splendid device: let the constitution take its course. Far be it from me to suggest that these gentlemen are not loyal; I would rather say, that it makes one hesitate as to whether that device so applied is not a sham. Is it a device that conveys a meaning which is hidden, or is it written so that the leader of the opposition and his friends may seek shelter under it, and so that they may not have to declare their policy upon this question, but rest content with saying, in the words of their leader:

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY.

I argue not for separate schools; I argue not against separate schools.

I have great respect for the leader of the opposition and especially have I respect for his legal opinion.

Mr. BOYCE. I am glad the hon. gentleman has respect for the Conservative leader.

Mr. L. G. McCARTHY. I am sorry that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Boyce) thinks himself so important as to imagine that we are very much concerned as to whether he is glad or not, notwithstanding the gratuitous kindness of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Boyce) I repeat that I have a great respect for the legal opinions of the leader of the opposition. But, in the whole course of his four hours speech, I failed to find that the leader of the opposition expressed a legal opinion as to what would be the effect in this case of letting the constitution take its course. After the leader of the opposition, we had a very eloquent speech from an old champion and who, notwithstanding that he is an old champion, was playing a new role. After twenty years in this House the member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) branches out upon a new line which is diametrically opposed to his past record. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster), I do not say it offensively, absolutely swallowed every principle he once cherished upon this question. Speaking in Toronto recently at McMaster University, he said:

Sterling integrity is the third quality that an aspirant for political honours should carry with him; it did not pay to be dishonest; your sins will soon find you out; in other words the public will get on to you.

Now, Sir, this is the language of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) who in the years between 1882 and 1896 supported the Jesuits Estate Bill—a Bill which recognized if any Bill ever did, the Papal power in this country, and which conveyed over \$1,000,000 to be disposed of under the dictation of the Papal power. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster), also supported the official use of the dual language in the Northwest Territories, and he endeavoured to coerce Manitoba into accepting separate schools. He also refused in 1894 to strike out this very clause, which is the cause of all the difficulty, and he got behind Sir John Thompson when he said, in 1894:

The reasons for passing that separate school legislation in 1875 are as good to-day as they were then.

Is that a declaration of principle? Is that not a record that ought to bind any public man, whether for his good or ill in public life?

Then, Sir, I call your attention to this fact, that this hon. gentleman, who made that speech yesterday, could not abide Dal-