

has since surpassed; and this is no disparagement of the English any more than the present pre-eminence of the Anglo-Saxon is a disparagement of the Spanish. May I remind my English-speaking friends also that three hundred years ago, in Venice and Genoa, those Catholic-ridden states, the system of book-keeping, of stock exchange, of currency, of everything which the Anglo-Saxon is using now with such success, was practiced to an extent which brought to those little republics a degree of prosperity and civilization which, considering their time and their size, has never been surpassed. I could go on with examples like these; I could make a history of the world with such examples, after the manner of a speech which was made in this House some years ago by I think my hon. friend from Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Sam. Hughes), who began at the creation and ended with the end of the world. I will content myself with stating the truism that nations grow, develop, prosper, and then pass into oblivion. The Greeks have passed; the Romans have passed; the Italians and Spanish have passed. Let the Anglo-Saxon look to the Slav and the Japanese before he concludes that he possesses the world for ever. But this is not the point. The point is, what has Catholic education done for Catholic countries? If our friends who are making so much noise about the corruption of Catholic countries would go to the depth of the history of those countries, they would find that their greatest time of material as well as moral prosperity coincided with the time when the Catholic church, not dominated, but inspired those countries, and when Catholic education high or low, was given to all classes of the people. Spain began to decay when greeders in the colonies displaced the missionaries—when the King of Spain lent himself to the anti-Catholic movement which started in France and which led to the abolition of the Jesuit order. The same thing happened in France. But why not go for an example to countries which are now under Catholic influence? The hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule)—I do not know what text book he got his information from, but if it is authorized in any province, it should be taken from the schools at once—spoke of the national non-sectarian system of education carried on in Belgium. Now, Belgium is one of the most prosperous countries on earth, and there you have Catholic education right through, from the primary school to the university. But let me point to a Protestant nation, Germany, where thirty-three years ago the Prussians abolished Catholic education and expelled the Jesuits and other religious orders from the country. What do you see there now? The German Emperor, observing the progress which Catholic education has made in the empire, is turning to the Catholic hierarchy and asking them to save his empire from the dangers

Mr. BOURASSA.

of socialism. Might I refer some of our friends also to the comments appearing daily in the American papers and reviews, coming not from Catholic priests or bishops or Catholic religious orders, but from Protestants, eminent Protestants, men of science, professors of universities and statesmen, among a few statesmen who find their way to political life in the United States, who recognize that what must save the United States from the social plague which is going to involve all nations between the crushing burden of capitalism and the equally crushing burden of standing armies, is the influence of the Catholic church on the working classes. I am not saying this in disparagement of any other creed; but, in view of the fact that during the past two months railing attacks have been made against the creed of two millions of the subjects of His Majesty in this country, I feel that I should stand up here and say that the Catholic people and the Catholic hierarchy will never suffer when compared with any other creed or sect.

But, leaving aside foreign countries, and coming to my own poor province, the province of Quebec, let us study for a moment what has been the influence of the Catholic church on the development of education in that province? It is generally contended in all English-speaking provinces that we are—I will not say an inferior race, because I do not think that is accepted by a great number of the English-speaking people; but it is very often contended that the system of education in the province of Quebec is an inferior one, and that that province has a greater number of illiterate people than any of the other provinces. It may be that a little insight into the history of the educational system of Quebec will throw some light on the subject. Before the conquest, the French government had given lavishly what was necessary for the support of public education in New France. At the time of the cession there was necessarily a great disturbance of the whole system. Five years after the cession of Canada the Jesuit order was suppressed by the Pope; and, strange to say, there was nobody at the time to raise an argument against the English government for using a papal bull. On the day that papal decision was registered, all the estates belonging to the Jesuits were seized by the British government. Those estates had been given to the Jesuits with the legal obligation of founding colleges and secondary and primary schools; and before the conquest they had established two colleges and a great number of primary schools—a greater proportion being given to the people of New France than were given in the British colonies to the south. After the estates of the Jesuits were seized by the British government, were the proceeds used for the education of the people? No. The Montreal College was destroyed, and was replaced by the Champ de Mars.