

on a motion of Mr. Tarte, then member for L'Islet, condemning the Conservative government for their course on the school question, the leader of the opposition of that day, now Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), said :

I have quoted to you the law which now prevails in Quebec—the law demanded by the Protestant population of that province giving them a school board of their own. I have quoted to you the law whereby in 1869 two separate boards of education were organized, a Roman Catholic board and a Protestant board. The Roman Catholic board to-day is composed of seventeen members, nine Catholic laymen and all the Catholic bishops of the province. Now suppose that to-morrow the legislature of Quebec were to abolish the Protestant school board. Then, by the effect of that law, the management of the Protestant school would become vested in the Roman Catholic board of the council of education, that is to say, practically in the hands of the Roman bishops. If such legislation were to be enacted by the legislature of Quebec, is there a man to say that it would not be a most infamous act of tyranny.

Perhaps these words are a little violent. But if an Act of the legislature of the province of Quebec putting the management of the Protestant schools under a Catholic board would constitute a most infamous act of tyranny, then, using a more moderate language, I would say that the effect of abolishing the right of the Catholics to supervise their schools and putting the Catholic schools of the Northwest under direct and exclusive control of the Protestant board at least constituted an act of injustice.

It is well we should know exactly what the position was, viewed from a different point of view. I entirely agree with my right hon. friend the Prime Minister in the words he uttered this afternoon when he said that if we want to build up a nation we can only do it on the principle of conciliation and fair-play to everybody. But if we are to put such a principle into practise there must be one law for all—one law for Protestants and Catholics alike, one law for French, English, Scotch and Irish. What has been done by the territorial government would be qualified as an infamous act of tyranny had it been done by a Catholic government at the expense of a Protestant minority. Shall that, then, which we would condemn as infamous if done by a Catholic government at the expense of a Protestant minority be qualified as an act of conciliation and fair-play when performed by a Protestant government at the expense of a Catholic minority? I leave it to the government to decide what difference there is between the two cases. But that is not the only point. If that had been the only attempt of the majority in the Northwest to deprive the minority of their rights, I would not be raising my voice in protest to-day. But the Protestant majority went further. They withdrew from the minority the right to choose their own text-books, which is

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another of those rights qualified by Lord Herschell as one of the essential rights pertaining to a system of separate schools. They also deprived the minority of their right to choose their own inspectors to inspect their schools, and of the right to give normal school training to their own teachers. They went so far as to compel the nuns to go out of the convents and take off their religious garbs if they desired to receive diplomas entitling them to teach; and this order was passed by the paternal government of Mr. Haultain. Those religious teachers who were qualified in France and England and in the province of Quebec, who had been teaching, some of them, for thirty-five years, were put on the same footing as young girls who had not diplomas, unless they chose to submit to Mr. Haultain's Russian ruling. So far as religious teaching is concerned, Mr. Haultain said, in an interview which he gave to the Toronto 'News' on the 14th April, 1905 :

There are two or three clauses in the ordinance of 1901, which, it is now argued, go to limit separate school powers. Every one of them outside of that creating a commissioner of education, Mr. Haultain points out, appears in the previous ordinances under which the dual system prevailed. Section 137 prohibits religious instruction earlier than 3.30 p.m., The ordinance of 1884, and all succeeding ordinances forbade religious instruction earlier than 3 p.m.

The same statement was made by the Prime Minister this afternoon, but I have proved that it is inaccurate. Although that provision is to be found in the ordinance of 1884, it was never put into force. In the ordinances of 1885, 1886, 1887 and 1888, full liberty was given separate schools so far as religious teaching is concerned. It was only in 1892 that, for the first time, was applied the ordinance limiting the right of religious instruction in these schools. On this point I want to correct a mistake made, not only by Protestants, but by Catholic members of this House. What we ask is not that the catechism be taught for half an hour during the time given to religious instruction. I have been in one of those church schools in the province of Quebec, and there all the teaching of catechism we had only took up one hour a week. But what we claim as inseparable from separate schools is that in the teaching of history, in the reading books, in the study of classical authors, we should have the right to impress upon the minds of the children the principles of our religion, and this again has been positively stated by Lord Herschell, in the second case of Manitoba, as one of the essential features of the separate school system, so far as Roman Catholics are concerned. Affidavits were produced there, just as declarations have been made here, to the effect that several Catholics did not care for that kind of religious teaching. But, as one of the other members of the Privy Council said : Whatever may be