

cord in the past. He referred to his record with regard to the Manitoba school controversy. I do not desire to discuss this question from too controversial a standpoint, but does my right hon. friend really feel satisfied to-day with his record on that question, which so much disturbed public opinion ten years ago? If ever there was a question in this country calculated to arouse passion and prejudice, and if ever such a question was deliberately thrown into the political arena for the purpose of political gain, it was the Manitoba school question. That question was precipitated into the political arena by the right hon. gentleman and his friends then in opposition, and by his Liberal friends in the province of Manitoba. There can be no doubt about that. Let us look at the record for a moment or two, as the hon. gentleman himself has called attention to it. There were difficulties surrounding the Conservative administration of that day. What was the attitude of my right hon. friend with regard to those difficulties? When the Conservatives desired to investigate, he was impatient of delay. When they desired to conciliate, he accused them of weakness and cowardice. When they sought an interpretation of the constitution in the courts, he declared that they were exciting passion and discord. When they proposed the remedial order, he declared it was ineffective and insufficient. When they sought to enforce it by an Act of this parliament, he declared it was too strong and drastic in its terms. He denounced in violent language the late Mr. Dalton McCarthy in 1890, not only as an enemy of his creed, but of his race, and three years later he was content to accept Mr. McCarthy's aid on that question. On one side of him, he established a very able gentleman, who does not now occupy a seat in this House, but who then represented the constituency of L'Islet, in the province of Quebec—he used that gentleman to declare that the rights of the minority were being betrayed in Manitoba. And on the other side he accepted the aid of Mr. McCarthy, who denounced the action of the Conservative government as coercive and oppressive. He himself posed in the English speaking provinces as the champion of provincial rights, and in the province of Quebec as the heaven-constituted protector of the minority. The hon. gentleman thus addressed himself with great skill to both opposing elements, and eventually succeeded in utilizing that question as the means of putting himself and his party into power. And after they did attain office, I ask my right hon. friend, in all seriousness and earnestness, whether or not he carried out to the full, and according to the spirit, the promise he made his compatriots in the province of Quebec. Well, the election came on, and my right hon. friend secured support in the English speaking provinces as the upholder of provincial rights. He secured also even a greater measure of sup-

port in the province of Quebec, and now he is face to face with the very same question to-day. Years ago Brougham, in the English House of parliament, addressed a cogent indictment against the gentleman who was then leading the English administration. There, he said, he sits to-day doing penance for the disingenuousness of years. Does my right hon. friend regard those words as having to-day some application to himself.

The prime minister first declared that this question is not one of separate schools, and then he proceeded to give us a long argument with regard to the value and necessity of such schools. I shall not follow him along that path. It is not, in my opinion, a question of separate schools, but a question of provincial rights. It is not a question of separate schools, but of provincial self-government. It is not a question of separate schools but of constitutional home rule. It is a question of those privileges and liberties of which the right hon. gentleman, up to the present at least, has claimed to be the champion and exponent. No one appreciates or respects more highly than I do the moral and ethical training which the Roman Catholic Church bestows upon the youth of Canada who were born within the pale of that church. I esteem at the highest the value of the moral training of the children of this country; and I am free further to confess that I appreciate more highly perhaps than some others the consistency and devotion of Roman Catholics, in this and other matters of their faith, wherein they give to the Protestants of this country an example from which the latter might well learn valuable lessons.

Perhaps in dealing with this question to-day I shall not make myself understood, as I would like to be understood, by many of my friends in the province of Quebec, whose esteem and friendship I value second to none of any of my fellow-citizens in Canada. I have met these gentlemen in friendly intercourse, both Conservatives and Liberals; I have found among them men of broad, generous spirit, men of culture, men of wide reading, men able to look beyond the confines of their province and of Canada, men inspired not only with patriotism and devotion to this country, but with a broad and generous spirit in their regard for those who happened to differ from them in political opinions or in matters of religion. And I would desire to make myself understood not only by those who are within the sound of my voice, but by all my friends in the province of Quebec, all of those whom I have known long and intimately and whose opinion I highly regard; I desire them to appreciate the fact that I, to-day, am standing on the rock of the constitution, as I understand that constitution; that I simply desire that the domination of this parliament shall not in any way destroy or undermine that foundation upon which the provincial rights of this country rest. And if there are any men in Canada

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.