

Halifax. These men are bigger than the church; they belong to the people. And Dr. Ryerson and his supporters endeavoured to settle these vexed questions against the opposition of the Liberal party led by Hon. George Brown, and reached a settlement in 1863 which was supposed to be final. And how long did it last. Just three years, and then the agitation began again. But what I say is this: If you admit the principle that this is according to the genius of our institutions, you must admit the necessity of change and improvement and must avoid that feature of the issue in future.

Mr. J. BUREAU (Three Rivers and St. Maurice). Mr. Speaker, I shall not take up much of your time, for this question has been pretty thoroughly threshed out, and hon. members have made up their minds whether they are to support the amendment or the Bill. But, before I enter upon the discussion of the Bill itself, there are a few statements made by my hon. friend from Dundas (Mr. Broder) on which I wish to take issue with him. The hon. gentleman has given it as a mark of the great tolerance of the people of Ontario that French is taught in the schools. Let me tell my hon. friend that we do not make English a part only of the curriculum in our schools, but we teach it in a practical way. And the hon. gentleman has had in this House some fair samples of what common schools can do to teach English to the French Canadians of Quebec. If the teaching of a language different from that of the majority is so great an evidence of toleration, I think that we in Quebec can fairly claim to be considered tolerant. The hon. gentleman would not have been regarded by his friends as making a speech if he had not tried to discredit the school system of Quebec. He had to read from the Montreal 'Herald' an extract which, at the very least, was very much exaggerated. It may be from the mouth of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick); it may be from the newspaper owned and controlled by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher). But I say that the schools of Quebec are not as inefficient as the hon. gentleman would have us believe. If you wish to form an opinion of our system of schools, judge it as you would judge anything else. You judge a tree by its fruit; judge the schools of the province of Quebec by the fruits of them that you see about you. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Broder) said that the French majority votes for Laurier, though he did not know their wants or recognize their claims in 1896. Let me tell my hon. friend that the French majority in Quebec listen, read and think before they vote. Let me mention just one case. There never was in Quebec a more popular man than the late Honoré Mercier. Yet, when the friends of hon. gentlemen opposite were able to bring that great leader even under the shadow of suspicion of corruption and dishonesty, the French Canadians voted

against him and he went down in irretrievable defeat. I do not think that the protestations of tolerance on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite will be received by the public. These hon. gentlemen accuse the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) of being the cause of the agitation and the strife that is going on in the country. But, Sir, with all the friendship and respect I have for my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) I am compelled to say that he was the man who started this agitation. When I read 'Hansard' I find that it has already been put on record that a circular was issued throughout the country by my hon. friend from East Grey, that circular being dated 16th February, 1905. Now, the Bill we are now discussing was brought down on the 21st of February, 1905. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Sproule) has stated in this House that he only used his right to petition parliament. I would be the last to deny that right to any man. But, the question is, did the hon. gentleman, as a representative of the people and as an elector of this country act in such a way as to bring peace and harmony, or did he not? He begins this circular to which I have referred, 'Dear Sir and Brother.' I suppose the hon. gentleman felt a sudden gush of brotherly love for his electors, or he thought that to call them brothers might create a little more sympathy. Let me read further on in the circular, and I find something else. Then he says, on the 16th of February:

We believe an effort is to be made to impose separate schools for all time to come on the people of the new provinces.

Now, Sir, why 'impose'? Did the hon. gentleman know anything about the clauses which this Bill was to contain? Did he know anything about the particulars, so as to be able to say how much imposition there was going to be in this Bill? Did he have any special information? If so, how did he get it, and where did he get it? Perhaps he may have got it in the same way that the confidential memorandum was obtained that was put before the Council by the ex-Minister of Railways. How could he foresee, with all his parliamentary experience and far reaching knowledge, how could he foresee, on the 16th of February, the details of a Bill that was not brought down until the 21st of February?

Mr. SPROULE. Was the forecast right or wrong?

Mr. BUREAU. Well, Sir, we can find that out by reading the balance of the circular, and by reading a little in the constitution. I say that the forecast was wrong, and for this reason.

Mr. SPROULE. I say the forecast was right.

Mr. BUREAU. That is where we take issue. You cannot impose anything on