

ferent with regard to these matters—indifferent, not hostile—and who possibly do not read to their children from that Book which I think we all agree will make any man that studies it and follows its precepts a good citizen. I am sure we all agree that any one who studies that Book cannot be an ignorant man, and that if he follows its precepts he cannot be a bad citizen. If we believe, as I think we do, that it is righteousness which exalts a nation, who will say that it is wrong to have during the half hour at the closing of the school portions of that Book taught and read to the children?

Will it be worse for them if they know the Ten Commandments? Will it be worse for them if they know the sermon on the mount in which is contained the golden rule? Or the fifteenth psalm that describes what a citizen ought to be. If it be desirable—as it is—that during the Sabbath afternoon, the children should be brought together in order to teach them these things, can it be wrong—if it can be agreed upon—that during half an hour in the afternoon of five other days of the week they should have the same instruction? I do not seek to obtrude my own personal views, I speak for myself alone. But I trust that that spirit will take possession of the men in the western country, and that, instead of repining or complaining if our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, in obedience to their conscience, give religious instruction to their youth, they also will devise means whereby religious instruction may be given in the schools. As I have said, I am aware of the difficulties that in the past, have prevented this being accomplished. But I do think that, with the spirit of charity that is abroad, and with many Protestants seeking means for a concerted movement in this direction, it would be well worth their while at any rate to give the matter some consideration. There have been noble men, Canadians of French extraction, who have laboured in the Northwest as missionaries in days gone by; and there have been grand Protestant clergymen who have engaged in the same work, believing that it is the duty of Canadians to establish the Christian religion in that country as the foundation of its institutions. Many a time have I heard such a view expressed publicly and at least once in my own home by one who has passed away, but whose memory is revered, one who was a noble patriot if ever there was one—that the great object to be sought in the Northwest Territories was to follow with religious ordinances the population pouring in there, so that they might become a great people and enduring power in the state. I say that I for one have no objections; nay more, I am glad to find, that it is proposed to continue such a law in the Northwest to give permission to the trustees of each school, pub-

lic or separate, to have such religious instruction as may be desired given during that half hour. Yet, it is provided that the children of parents—if such there be—who cannot approve of the teaching given have the privilege of withdrawing their children while that instruction is in progress. No man's conscience can be offended in the least. And the further provision is made, lest, perchance the possible case might arise of an inspector, or school trustee or teacher seeking to place the child so withdrawn by his parents during that half hour at a disadvantage because of that withdrawal, that such an Act would be an offence subjecting the one guilty of it to summary loss of his office. So, there is eminently safe provision made. In these provisions I find that which not only I do not disapprove but that which meets my cordial approval.

I was pleased to receive the resolution forwarded to me by the gentleman who acted as secretary on the occasion when it was adopted. He accompanied it with a personal letter to myself. The writer is a reverend gentleman whose personal friend I should deem it an honour to be considered. I believe he is also a political friend of the party in power. I cannot give the exact words, but he said in effect that he was not disposed to blame the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier)—though he did not approve of this measure, of course—as some were disposed to do; but he was disposed to blame the members of the cabinet from Ontario. What are they doing? he said. I find Mr. Stapleton Caldecott, who presided at the meeting at Toronto in his opening remarks wanted to know where the Ontario members of the cabinet were on this question; were they favourable, or were they unfavourable? Well, I had supposed that Mr. Stapleton Caldecott knew enough of constitutional procedure to know that when the Ontario members of the cabinet remained in the cabinet after the measure had been proposed, he could pretty well know, or at least guess, where they were on that question.

Mr. FOSTER. Not now-a-days.

Mr. PATERSON. Mr. Caldecott stated that, while he had been a great admirer of the Prime Minister and his supporter, he must confess that he had lost respect for his judgment. When a gentleman like that did not know that the presence in the cabinet of the ministers of Ontario was an indication that they approved the measure, perhaps the loss of his respect for the Prime Minister's judgment on a constitutional question was not so serious a matter that it ought to break my right hon. friend's heart? Mr. Caldecott is a friend of ours, no doubt. But that leads me to remark upon something that has been more

Mr. PATERSON.