

people were of the Roman Catholic majority, these were the very people whom my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) says were driving the Protestants out and yet they went to the United States in considerably larger numbers, even proportionately, than the Protestant minority of that province. The statement of the Huntingdon 'Gleaner' is absolutely unfounded and far-fetched. My hon. friend has here again shown his credulity when listening to stories about the condition of affairs in Quebec. If he went to Quebec and studied a little more on the spot, he would not make such statements as he has done. It has been said that the Catholics can go to Protestant schools, that there is no earthly reason why Catholics should not go to Protestant schools because offensive religion is not taught in public schools, but that Protestant children cannot go to Catholic separate schools because the Catholic religion is taught in them. So far as the province of Quebec is concerned, I do not know that there is any more reason why the Protestants should object to their children going to a Catholic school in that province than why a Catholic should object to his children going to a Protestant school. It is true that the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) the other day said that the schools where they did not speak of God are Protestant schools. I am sorry my hon. friend said that, because he ought to know better as he comes from the province of Quebec; he should know that the Protestant schools of Quebec are not schools in which God is not mentioned, are not schools which can in any way be called Godless schools. Sir, the Protestant religion is taught in the Protestant schools of the province of Quebec just as much as the Catholic religion is taught in the Catholic schools. I have here the report of the superintendent of public instruction of Quebec for the year 1903-4, the last one which I have received. I have here the curricula of the elementary Catholic and the elementary Protestant schools of the province of Quebec. I find in the curriculum for the Catholic elementary schools for the first year the first morning exercises are prayers and catechism taught orally, for the second year prayers and catechism, for the third year catechism, for the fourth year catechism. These are the opening exercises of the regular curriculum in the Catholic elementary schools of the province of Quebec. Now what do I find in regard to Protestant schools? I find that the first half hour of each day is to be devoted to the opening exercises, scripture reading, singing and prayer, instruction in scripture as below, and in morals, including readings and lessons upon Godliness, truthfulness, honour, respect for others, good manners, temperance, health, kindness to animals, &c., first lesson for the day is scripture knowledge. In grade I, events connected with the birth of Christ, outlines of chief events to the end

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of the life of Joseph. Grade II—as in previous year, together with the Circumcision and Presentation of Jesus and outlines of chief events to the death of Joseph. I find in grade III there is the same thing and in grade IV studies about the life and words of Christ.

In other words the Catholic schools of Quebec and the Protestant schools of Quebec both teach religion, each according to the lights and faith of their church, and it would be just as offensive for one portion of the people of the province to be obliged to have their children go and listen to the religious teaching of the other as vice versa. Under these circumstances, I want to repel the statement of the hon. member for Beauharnois, that the Protestant schools of Quebec are Godless and secondly I want to point out that it is no more right that the Protestants of Quebec or the Protestants of this country should ask that the Catholics should be forced to go to Protestant schools than it is that the Protestants should be forced to go to the Catholic schools. The legitimate and logical conclusion of this statement is that we must have in Canada separate schools, and if we have separate schools, Sir, that they should be guaranteed to the people who enjoy them and that they should not be dependent on the will of a local majority which may change its mind.

There is another argument in favour of separate schools. Supposing that we have public schools in which no religion is taught at all. We have a large number of people in this country who believe that a proper and good education requires religious instruction, that it is necessary in a school to have the children taught in religious exercises. If in public schools religion is not taught and if Catholics are obliged to pay their taxes to the public schools, then if they want to live up to their conscientious convictions they would be obliged instead of sending their children to the public school to keep them at home or to create out of their own pockets with their voluntary subscriptions private schools in which their form of education should be taught. Now, Sir, if their taxes are obliged to be paid to the public schools, it is very evident that these same people cannot effectively and efficiently keep up private schools as well owing to the payment of their taxes into the public schools. It is not to be expected that they could do so, and the result would be that the Catholic people of our country, not being able conscientiously to send their children to the public schools in which no religion is taught, not being able to get in those public schools the religious education which they think conscientiously it is right and proper their children should be taught, would be obliged to pay taxes to public schools and then would be obliged to provide, to the best of their ability, but necessarily inefficiently and ineffectively, schools in which religious in-