

in which sectarian prejudice is appealed to, the result of public school education, and we are justified in saying that in the province of Quebec, under our system, we have never produced any thing of the kind.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) has pointed with pride to his own province. But there is still one province ahead of Nova Scotia as far as the spirit of tolerance is concerned, and that is the province of Quebec. Do some of our friends who make so much noise about the illiteracy and narrow mindedness of that province under priestly control, know that Lower Canada was the first self-governing part of the British Empire, not excluding Great Britain and Ireland, where disabilities were removed from the Jews? We emancipated the Jews in the province of Quebec before the Catholics were emancipated in England. At the very time that we in the province of Quebec were denied our most sacred natural rights, every new creed that came to that province was given complete civil and corporate powers. Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists were granted by the Legislative Assembly of Quebec the same powers to keep civil registers and act as corporate bodies as were given Catholics. Do they know that at the time when we were denied the right of teaching our children according to our conscience, we always put Protestant schools on the same footing as our own as regards the law and the constitution? I go further, as far as the working of our system of education is concerned. May I refer hon. members to a speech made by the right hon. the First Minister in 1893 in which he said in substance: 'I know that the law protects the minority in the province of Quebec, but there are many ways in which an unwilling majority can evade the law—and we have evidence of that in several provinces of the Dominion. Suppose, for instance, the government of the province of Quebec were to abolish the Protestant section of the Council of Education. Would not that be an infamous thing which would call for redress at the hands of a federal government? Well, that was done by the government of the Northwest Territories some years ago. But if it be infamous to abolish the supervision of Protestant schools by Protestants, how comes it to be perfectly proper to abolish the supervision of Catholic schools by Catholics? How can one thing be good in the west and bad in the east? How can it be just in the west and unjust in the east? If we are to make a nation of this country, surely every one will admit that the principle must prevail, not in word but in fact, of equal rights and equal justice to all.

To again give the House an idea of what kind of argument is offered to our English speaking friends these days on this question, may I read a few lines written by a very talented gentleman in the city of Quebec, and an Anglican minister, the Rev. F. G. Scott:

Mr. BOURASSA.

If we are to be a house divided against itself, if we are to set province against province and perpetuate our racial discords, there can be but one ultimate result, and that is the submergence of Canada by the United States and the grand sweeping away of all of our civil strife by the uprooting of treaties, rights and legal safeguards under a nation that recognizes no state religion and tolerates no duality of speech.

To avert that, to save Canada to Canadians, we must establish, as I have said a broad spirit of Canadian sentiment and that can only be done by a system of national common schools. The day is past when we looked to England's interests first. Canada comes first to Canadians; and to the west, broad, tolerant and expansive, we look for the light and healing of the spirit of true Canadianism that will put an end to the inherited animosities which darken and strangle the national life of the older Canada.

And then there is this still better:

Of course, the true inwardness of this attempt to force upon the new provinces a school system distasteful to them, is the desire to establish French Canadian colonies in the west, where separate schools would enable them to establish the French language over wide areas. The means for doing this would be readily furnished by the religious communities expelled from France, and it would not be many years before there would grow up in the west a new Quebec, with all its racial, lingual and sectarian animosities, eating the life out of true Canadian nationalism.

There are English-speaking Protestants from my province in this House. I wish the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher) were here. I see here my hon. friend from Shefford (Mr. Parmelee). And the hon. member for Montreal, St. Antoine (Mr. Ames) is present. I will ask any one of these Protestant representatives from my province, whether present at the moment or not, and whether Conservative or Liberal, and regardless of their opinions in the legislation that is now before us, to state frankly in this House whether there is, in their opinion, in any part of Canada, or in any part of the world, so much toleration of so much breadth of mind as that shown by French Canadians towards their English-speaking Protestant compatriots. The other day a letter was published in the Toronto 'News' which attracted my attention. It was written by a gentleman in the town of Aylmer in the neighbouring county of Wright. This is what it said, speaking of the schools of Quebec:

The separate school system is one of distrust, suspicion and antagonism. . . . As it is, the priesthood are given control and proficiency, while they teach the merest rubbish for history, while the teaching of the catechism leaves no other impression possible but that Protestants are a curse to the earth.

Now, that letter was written in the county of Wright opposite Ottawa. That county is two-thirds French Canadian and four-fifths Catholic. There was a by-election in that county three weeks