

long as it in no way offends against the religious belief, the teachings and the dogma of any class or creed, it shall be a national system to which we shall all contribute? In that way they declare that the children meet together and that there are no distinctions between them. In their sports, in their studies, in their social growth they mingle and commingle, they learn to know each other, they grow up with a common bond and a common interest in their country and the affairs of their country. That is their view. It may be wrong or it may be right. Then they say that by that system we avoid the divisions into separate districts with their consequent inefficiency, and increased cost. Therefore, they say, we have a more efficient system and we have also a less costly system. That is their point of view. Let manners and morals, let the bases of right conduct be taught in the schools, let those be inculcated, but no dogma of any sect. Let each class teach their dogma where they please; it may be in the Sunday school, or in the church, or in some other place, but if there is any sect, Presbyterian, Methodist, Church of England or Roman Catholic which wishes to teach their own belief and their own religion in any institution governed by themselves, there is no law which forbids them to do it in this country. There is no prohibition. These are in broad terms the distinctive characteristics of the national school system. Suppose the Presbyterians were to say: We want dogmatic teaching. the answer to them would be: Provide for it as best you may: you have your churches, you have your Sunday schools, teach religion in them: you can have your colleges and your seminaries and your institutions which are entirely under your religious domination, teach religion in them. And the same answer is given to every body, Protestant sect, Catholic sect, any sect. Where is the tyranny in that?

Mr. BOURASSA. Will the hon. gentleman allow me to interrupt?

Mr. FOSTER. Yes.

Mr. BOURASSA. The very argument which the hon. gentleman now makes was the argument presented by the government of Manitoba on the second appeal in the Barrett case, and the judgment of the Privy Council was that such a system of national schools was a glaring injustice to the Roman Catholics, and the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) was in favour of passing remedial legislation.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. FOSTER. I would advise my hon. friends not to applaud before they hear the answer. The assumption of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Bourassa) is not correct. There were other circumstances in that case, and one was that the Manitoba legislature had

given rights to the minority under their full powers, that under the same full powers the Manitoba legislature had revoked these rights, and it was on account of the prejudicial effect of what has been given being taken back that the question came before the federal parliament. That was the principal idea that came into the case and upon which the decision rested.

Mr. BOURASSA. I do not wish to interrupt my hon. friend—

Mr. FOSTER. Go on.

Mr. BOURASSA. I simply wish to say that my interruption was not to discuss the legal question, but with the object of refuting the argument the hon. gentleman has made that such a system of national schools ought to be satisfactory to Catholics.

Mr. FOSTER. I do not suppose we can see eye to eye about that, but as I wish to finish before six o'clock I hope my hon. friend (Mr. Bourassa) will not think me discourteous if I do not follow the point further. For the few moments that are left me I wish to take my last point, not to treat it as fully as it deserves, but simply to throw out a few thoughts by way of suggestion. I want to ask in the first place why there should be any attempt to inject into the constitution of these new provinces the principle of separate schools, without authority from them, against the disposition and against the feelings of the people of the Northwest so far as we can judge? Why is this attempt made to cripple these great provinces? Each of the other provinces, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Manitoba, is absolutely free and sovereign in so far as such legislation is concerned. Each one of these provinces of her own good will may enact a separate school system and it may also abrogate that law, but if it does abrogate it it has to show cause before the jurisdiction of the federal parliament and with the possible consequence of remedial legislation. And if we can trust all these other provinces what reason in the world is there that we should for ever tag with a badge of inferiority these two great coming provinces of the Northwest? When every other province stands clothed in the majesty of provincial rights, why should we single out Saskatchewan and Alberta, and because we happen to be the guardian of the children put upon them for ever a badge of inferiority? Is it not a retrograde step in thought and in practice to stand on our small platform of 1905 and to hold up a statute of limitations for ever in the face of two provinces, in which, as the centuries roll on changes must inevitably come, systems come and systems go, new methods take the place of old. But the right hon. gentleman stands up here with his small statute of limitation and he declares against the whole possible progress of these great