

Mr. BOURASSA. Certainly; that is what I have always understood. But the government organs in the province of Quebec during the last month, among them 'Le Canada', 'Le Soleil' and 'La Patrie', have stated that under these ordinances as well as under the clause in the government Bill, the teaching of French is guaranteed for all time; and I wanted to elucidate the fact from the Minister of Justice. I know that it was not guaranteed in the clause as at first introduced, because, as the Minister of Justice says, the question of separate schools was never regarded as having reference to language, but only as referring to creed. But let us see how under the paternal legislation of Mr. Haultain religious education and the teaching of French are guaranteed, I will not say in the Catholic public schools—that is, those that are organized and paid for by the Catholics and French Canadians—but in the only separate schools that are now left to the French Canadians of the Northwest. Clause 136 of the ordinance says:

All schools shall be taught in the English language, but it shall be permissible for the board of any district to cause a primary course to be taught in the French language.

Clause 137 provides for religious instruction:

No religious instruction, except as hereinafter provided, shall be permitted in the school of any district from the opening of such school until one half hour previous to its closing in the afternoon, after which time any such instruction permitted or desired by the board may be given.

Now, section 133 says:

School shall be held between nine o'clock and twelve o'clock in the forenoon and half-past one o'clock and four o'clock in the afternoon of every day, standard time, not including Saturdays, Sundays or holidays, but the board may alter or shorten the school hours upon receiving the permission of the commissioner.

Now let us look at the regulations which are adopted by the department of education under section 7, and therefore form an inseparable part of the law under which this honourable compromise is going to be effected. As hon. members may have noticed, section 133 says that the trustees may shorten the school hours with the permission of the commissioner. Now, what is the regulation on that point?

School shall be held between the hours of nine o'clock and twelve o'clock in the forenoon and half-past one o'clock and four o'clock in the afternoon (standard time) of every day except Saturdays, Sundays, and days declared to be holidays by or under the School Ordinance.

This is in conformity with section 133 of the ordinance. But article 16 of the regulations says:

The board of any district may direct that school be opened at 9:30 a.m., during the whole or a portion of the months of November, Dec-

ember, January and February; and the board of any rural district may direct that only one hour's intermission be taken at noon, in which case school shall be closed at 3:30 p.m.

Article 17 says:

During both the morning and afternoon sessions recreation periods of fifteen minutes each shall be allowed all pupils attending school. Upon direction of the board all or any of the pupils in Part I of Standard I shall be given additional recreation periods not exceeding one half hour during the day; and in town and village districts the board may direct that all or any of such pupils may be allowed to leave for their homes at any time between 11 and 12 a.m., and 3 and 4 p.m.

So that it will be seen that when the parents or trustees in the Northwest want to do what is done in every civilized country, that is, to have shorter hours for the younger children, in order that they may get a little fresh air and go home earlier, the only time they can do that is from three to four o'clock in the afternoon. What about the clause permitting the teaching of French to these young children, who are the only ones allowed to be taught French? Article 25 of the regulations says:

Subject to the provisions of section 136 of the School Ordinance the board of any district may employ one or more competent persons to instruct the pupils attending school in any language other than English. Such instruction shall be given between the hours of three and four o'clock in the afternoon of such school days as may be selected by the board and shall be confined to the teaching of reading, composition and grammar. The text books used shall be those authorized by the commissioner of education.

They are not allowed to read even the history of their own country in their native language. They are not allowed to read the history of the province of Quebec in French. More than that, if they are allowed to have half an hour of religious teaching, that half hour must coincide with the time they are allowed to go home, and if they want to be taught French also, they must learn it in the half hour in which they are allowed to have religious instructions. This is the law we are asked to consider as a fair compromise in the interests of the minority. Sir, there are no such restrictions imposed on any one of the conquered provinces of India—I am not speaking of the semi-dependencies. Go into the Punjab or Bengal, and I say that in those provinces the autocratic power of the British government would not dare to impose on the natives a law such as we are asked in this parliament to adopt as the basis of our constitution, and that in a country in which we are supposed to enjoy some kind of constitutional right and which, in the words of the leader of the Conservative party, should not be considered as a conquered country. Why, in South Africa, Lord Kitchener offered to the Boers, who had just laid down their arms, terms as to their