

What was the result? The people of Quebec led by Lafontaine and joined by Baldwin rallied the broad-minded and tolerant men of Canada to their standard and routed old Toryism in this country for ever. Then George Brown emerged from the Baldwin party and began an agitation to unite the Protestants of Upper and Lower Canada against the Roman Catholic minority with the result that he kept Sir John Macdonald in power for a generation. Then our over-zealous fellow-countrymen in Ontario led on by the 'Mail and Empire' started a similar propaganda in more recent times with the result that the Liberal party led by Sir Oliver Mowat held power in Ontario for a quarter of a century. And, Sir, in view of our past history and the circumstances that surround us at present it is plain to every thinking man, and the leader of the opposition himself must have realized it by this time, that the course adopted by him to-day in regard to this measure will have the effect of cementing the ranks of the Liberal party from the Atlantic to the Pacific and perpetuating Liberal rule in this country for the next twenty years. I know very well that the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) does not like the position that he is in, does not like the task that some of his over-zealous friends have imposed on him on this occasion. I have always felt sorry that he was placed in that position as he is an eminent fellow-countryman of my own. And I firmly believe that if he had a good, large following from the province of Nova Scotia, and if he continued to represent the good old county of Halifax, where race and religious disputes are unknown, he would find it easier to make his way through this tangle than he has found it under existing circumstances.

The two provinces that profess to have this question most at heart are the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba. It is from the Tory press and the Tory politicians of these provinces that the wild, hysterical appeals have come to which we have been compelled to listen during the course of this agitation. What is the past record of the Conservative party in these provinces on this question? Is it such that we are bound to give them credit for sincerity now? What did the Conservatives in these provinces do in 1896? Did they stand by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, or did they vote for their own party, which, at that time, was attempting to force separate schools of a clerical type on the province of Manitoba? On that occasion, which was the only occasion in the history of this country when the people had an opportunity to vote upon this question Ontario gave Sir Wilfrid Laurier 44 supporters out of 92 representatives elected, and Manitoba elected four Conservatives, two Liberals and one independent. Such is the record of these hysterical gentlemen on the only occasion in all their lives when they

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had an opportunity of showing that they had genuine and sincere convictions on this question; and that is a record that entitles every thoughtful man in Canada to regard their present agitation as a thoroughly political agitation carried on, not for the purpose of establishing free schools in the west, but for the sole purpose of getting votes for the Conservative party. What are the facts? We all know that the course of the Toronto 'Globe' has not been friendly to the Liberal party on this question, and perhaps I cannot do better than to read to you a short extract from the Toronto 'Globe' describing the system of schools we are establishing in the west. We all want to place that before our friends in the country, because, that is, after all the vital question. I want to show what kind of schools we are giving to the new provinces, and this article from the Toronto 'Globe' explains that point:

Stick to the facts.

No good can come of misrepresenting the facts in the controversy respecting the schools in the new provinces. It is a gross misrepresentation to pretend that what is called a separate school in the Territories is the same thing as a separate school in Ontario. By no stretch of language could the separate school in the west be designated as a church school. From 9 o'clock in the morning till 3.30 in the afternoon the schools of the Catholic or Protestant minority are conducted precisely as the public schools are conducted. The scholars are taught by a teacher certificated and authorized by the Department of Education of the Territories; he teaches from the same text-books as are used in the public schools; he follows the same programme as is followed in the public schools; his school is regularly inspected by the inspector that inspects the public schools, and if the teaching were unsatisfactory the government could withhold the public grants. So thoroughly undenominational is the teaching that Protestant children attend separate schools when these are more convenient than public schools. The only privilege that the Catholic minority obtain is that the teacher is a Catholic, and after half-past three may impart religious instruction according to the tenets of the Catholic church to the children who choose to remain.

These are the facts, and those who are honestly seeking a permanent and satisfactory solution of the vexed questions which arise under the Autonomy Bills can afford to admit them. Those who are merely desirous of forwarding their political designs by appeals to passion are unfortunately seeking to mislead people and distort the facts of the case.

This is the description of the facts given by the Toronto 'Globe' and it is a very fair description. Now, Sir, it comes down to this, that we are, by the educational clauses of this Bill, establishing a national system of public schools for the west with the right to give one-half hour's religious instruction to the pupils at the close of each day. This is not a new idea by any means. We have the same in the province of Nova Scotia, and we have had it for a great many years. This was brought to the attention