

THE LEGISLATURE.

THE DEBATE ON FRENCH IN ONTARIO SCHOOLS RESUMED.

**A Brilliant Speech by Hon. C. F. Fraser**  
 —Mr. Awrey, Mr. Balfour and  
 Other Liberals Aply Support  
 the Minister of Education—  
 Speeches by the Two  
 Clarkes—Mr. Hess  
 is Eloquent—  
 The Debate  
 Closed.

MARCH 11th, 1889.

At the Legislature to-day the debate on the use of the French language in the Public schools was taken up this afternoon again. Most of the speeches were good, and that by Mr. Fraser exceptionally able. The points previously brought out were pretty thoroughly threshed out and some new ones added.

THIRD READINGS.

The following bills were read a third time:—

To amend the Act respecting the federation of the University of Toronto and University College with other universities and colleges—Mr. Ross (Middlesex).

To incorporate the Town of West Toronto Junction—Mr. Gilmour.

SECOND READINGS.

These bills were read a second time:—

To enable the corporation of the Village of Wyoming to dispose of certain lands—Mr. Graham.

Respecting the Boards of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec—Mr. Dryden.

Respecting the Port Arthur Water, Light & Power Company—Mr. Conmee.

To incorporate the Ontario Inland Marine Mutual Insurance Association—Mr. Leys.

Respecting the City of Toronto—Mr. E. F. Clarke (Toronto).

Respecting the York roads and surveys thereof—Mr. Smith (York).

THE SEED GRAIN COMPANY.

Mr. Tooley moved:—

That Sessional Papers No. 74 of the last session, being a return of copies of the evidence taken by Mr. Amelius Irving, Q. C., with reference to the Ontario Grain & Seed Company, together with his report, be referred to the Printing Committee with instructions to consider the propriety of printing the same for distribution.

The motion was carried.

UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. Meredith moved for an order of the House for a return of copies of all correspondence between any member of the Government and the president of University College, or between any member of the Government and Professor Schurman, or between the president of University College and Professor Schurman touching any proposed appointment of the last named gentleman to any position in the University of Toronto or University College.

The Minister of Education said there was no correspondence on the subject, and the motion was withdrawn.

FRENCH IN ONTARIO SCHOOLS.

THE DEBATE ON THE QUESTION CONTINUED BY VARIOUS MEMBERS.

Mr. Awrey, in resuming the debate on Mr. Craig's motion, condemned the tone of the speech made by Mr. Meredith last Friday. He had embarked upon and had committed his party to a policy of oppression and race prejudice, a policy calculated to do far more to break up the Canadian Confederation than any other that could possibly be adopted. As to the charges made by Mr. Meredith concerning the teaching of the French tongue in the Public schools, and which had been answered before they were made by the hon. Minister of Education speaking in the same debate, how was it that the hon. gentleman, the leader of the Opposition, had sat silent in the House for no less than sixteen years, and never once raised his voice in condemnation of the policy pursued? Was it because he had just become aware of those fancied wrongs? No! That was not it. The leader of the Opposition, he feared, was once more going to range himself under the banner of The Toronto Mail, the paper that led them to disaster three years ago. That paper was again to be at once the organ and the leader of Mr. Meredith. In its comments on the speeches of the Minister of Education and of Mr. Meredith that (Monday) morning, The Toronto Mail was anything but laudatory in its reference to the magnificent and ably argued speech of the Minister of Education, while it was lavish

in its praises of the efforts of Mr. Meredith. Certainly Mr. Meredith and The Toronto Mail were again in line on the question of exciting race prejudices. Mr. Awrey referred also to Mr. Craig's contention that the Roman Catholic catechism was used as a text book in the Public school of L'Orignal. He had doubted the accuracy of the hon. gentleman's very positive assertion, and he had also mentally condemned the hon. gentleman for having, intentionally or otherwise, thrown ridicule upon the doctrines of any denomination. He had applied to the chairman of the Board of Trustees for information on the point, and had received the following telegram, which amply corroborated the explanation of the Minister of Education on the same point:—

Catechism used twice a week; fifteen minutes each time; not as a text book. Simply religious instruction under regulation.

The telegram was signed by the chairman of the Board and was an ample reply to Mr. Craig's charge. (Applause).

Mr. Meredith.—Hear, hear.

Mr. Awrey continuing, quoted from the educational reports, etc., to show more fully even than the Minister of Education did how careful was the Department of Education to secure the thorough teaching of English in every Public school. He showed the absurdity, too, of the two millions of English-speaking people of Ontario being afraid they would be outgrown and swamped by 120,000 French Canadians. Did Mr. Meredith think that the race which had left its mark on every land it had touched was in this land only, of all the earth, going to be wiped out by another race vastly inferior to it in numbers? The idea was absurd. Mr. Meredith had lost faith in his race and proposed to console himself by opposing the French.

Mr. E. F. Clarke, who received a hearty greeting, said he wanted to place himself on record in this matter. The question of the education of the young was one of the most sacred duties imposed upon the House. He had not been educated in the schools of Canada and knew, therefore, nothing of them from personal experience. That did not make him less anxious for their future welfare. He could not help expressing again the wish he had expressed two years ago, that all the children of Ontario, of whatever religious denomination, should attend the same schools. (Conservative applause.) The Minister of Education on Friday had dwelt upon the liberality of the neighboring Republic, pointing out that they allowed German and French and other foreign tongues to be taught in foreign communities there. But he did not understand (and here Mr. Clarke repeated Mr. Meredith's principal argument of Friday) that the general instruction given in those schools was given in a foreign tongue, but rather that this was given in English, and that the foreign tongue was taught only as any other foreign tongue might be taught. As to Separate schools, while he so strongly deprecated them, he was prepared to admit that the Ontario Legislature was not responsible for their existence. They had been brought into existence before Confederation, and were continued at Confederation under the British North America Act. This did not, however, make any stronger the reasons for the existence of Separate schools, and he still hoped the time would come when his Roman Catholic fellow-citizens would consent to go in with the Protestants and make their system of

Public schools a complete one. But while the Government could not be held responsible for the existence of Separate schools, they could and would be held responsible for any further encroachment on the school system. The Government was entirely responsible for the encroachment of the French tongue on the English. This was a British Canadian country, an English-speaking country. Nineteen-twentieths of the people were desirous that it should remain an English-speaking country, and the present policy of the Government was directly contrary to that desire, inasmuch as in some counties French was given precedence over English in the Public schools.

Mr. Harcourt rose for a moment to ask how, if the English language only were used in those French schools in giving instruction in every branch of learning, the children without a knowledge of English were to be made understand each other.

Nobody replied for the Opposition, but Mr. Meredith said that was not what he meant.

Mr. Balfour desired to say a few words to the House, because he was in a position to say something of a practical character, living as he did in the County of Essex, where French schools prevail. As Mr. Harcourt said, how are these French boys and girls