

that followed in the Public Schools. These matters were all within the legislative jurisdiction of the Province of Ontario, and should be dealt with by the House. He had hoped that the Hon. the Minister of Education would have taken higher ground upon the question: there was a strong feeling throughout the length and breadth of the country on the question, a feeling that was not to be trifled with. The Opposition, so far from promoting bigotry and intolerance, were bent upon avoiding race and sectional cries. But it was not in the interests of the country that there should not be an open, manly defence of the rights of the majority. There should be no yielding to the unjust claims of a minority. He would take again the position he took in 1886, that the Separate Schools of the country could not be done away with. The only reason why they should at any time be abolished was, if they were intended, and if, instead of recognising the rights of the individuals, the Government should recognise the right of a Church to govern and control the Separate Schools. But not only in regard to this issue did honorable gentlemen blame the Opposition for bigotry. It was stated that they sought to raise race cries in the Province of Ontario. He denied the charge and hurled back the No-Popery cry in the faces of honorable gentlemen opposite who raised it because the Opposition honestly advocated changes in the school laws. It mattered not what might be said, he and his friends in the House would hold by the course they had undertaken. He had no sinister motive in raising such a cry, and could point to the record of his whole public life as against the charge. What had he to gain by raising such a cry? Personally he had no desire to change from his side of the House to the Government benches, and if he had a laudable ambition for advancement in another direction the position now taken by him would be against him. In closing, he said on the ground laid down the Opposition were prepared to stand in the House and in the appeal to the country that was at hand. Amid applause Mr. Meredith sat down shortly after nine o'clock, having spoken for an hour and a quarter.

At the close of Mr. Meredith's speech Hon. Mr. Fraser, amid hearty applause, rose to reply, and for close upon three hours discussed the question. He concluded about fifteen minutes after midnight, and the House immediately adjourned.

**UNRESTRICTED RECIPROCITY.**

Mr. Graham gives notice of the following motion:—"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that closer relations should exist between the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada, and that the House do humbly petition the Legislature of the Dominion of Canada to take such steps as they may deem expedient to bring about Unrestricted Reciprocity between the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada."

**MINORITY RIGHTS.**

**Hon. C. F. Fraser's Brilliant Speech**

**ON THE SEPARATE SCHOOL QUESTION.**

**The Conservative Party and the Roman Catholic Vote.**

**HOW THEY DROVE IT FROM THEM.**

**The Grand Lodge Government Mr. Meredith Would Have to Form if He Were Returned, and What the Minority Might Expect From it.**

Following is a report of the speech delivered Tuesday evening in the Legislature by Hon. C. F. Fraser, Commissioner of Public Works.

The hon. gentleman followed close upon Mr. Meredith, and was received with hearty applause as he rose. Mr. Meredith, he said, had started out alright apparently, but had not gone far before it was manifest that, whatever his intention was, he was going to make an appeal to a certain class in this Province which might possibly tide him over to the Government side of the House. Mr. Meredith asked what could be the motives which would induce him to take this position. Why, even the page behind him could tell him, it was so self-evident. He (Mr. Fraser) had hoped that Mr. Meredith would confine himself to a discussion of the bill before the House, but he had taken the House very far afield, dealing with the whole question of Separate Schools, and, therefore, he (Mr. Fraser) would also have to go further afield than he had intended to.

It would be necessary, it seemed to him, to clear up a little as he went along. He was not at present going to follow his hon. friend. He was not, for instance, at pre-

had to say about the hierarchy of the Church, nor what he had especially to say about Archbishop Cleary. His candid opinion was, as between the hon. gentleman and Archbishop Cleary, the latter was able to take care of himself, and his impression was that the scoring which Archbishop Cleary had recently given him accounted for a good deal of the spirit of the attack of the hon. gentleman. (Applause.) Nor was he going to follow him through other matters with which he concerned the House respecting the hierarchy, unless at a later moment he should think it of any consequence so to do. It appeared to him from the London speech of the hon. gentleman, and still more clearly from his speech to-night—because in his London speech he did not go quite so far as he did to-night—together with what the member for Toronto, his first lieutenant, who occupied a seat beside him on the platform on the occasion of his speech at London, had to say—and together with the speech of the member for Muskoka and the resolutions passed at West Toronto Junction, the Convention at which Mr. Clendenning was nominated only very recently—taking these things all together, it was tolerably clear they had heard the

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which was intended to accomplish the abolition of Separate Schools. So they had better see now where they were, what the term Separate Schools meant, what principle was involved in it, how its supporters might or might not be concerned, and how the school law might be enforced. The general impression seemed to be that when a man became a supporter of a Public School or of a Separate School, what was meant by that was that he was compelled to send his children to a Public or Separate School as the case might be. He did not read the law as meaning anything of the kind. When they talked of a Public School supporter it meant no more than this, that he was paying a certain amount to the support of a Public School to which he need not send his children at all. As a matter of fact, so far as this law of the Province of Ontario was concerned every Separate School supporter could, though he were required to pay taxes to a Public School, still send his children to a Separate School. The public mind must be disabused of the idea that he could not do this, because the public mind was greatly mistaken on that point. There was no law to compel a man to send his child to any particular school, and there was no such law in any land on this Continent, or in any civilised land in the world. All the hon. gentleman would succeed in doing if he did succeed in abolishing Separate Schools would be to compel those of the Roman Catholic religion—just as they were being compelled across the lines—to pay for the support of a Public School to which they could not conscientiously send their children, and to carry on besides schools which to all intents and purposes would be the same as the Separate Schools of to-day. He told the hon. gentleman, with respect to the 300,000 ratepayers of this Province forming its religious minority, who were dealing with this question of Separate Schools from the standpoint of their religion, and to whom it was a matter of conscience—who, when they talked of supporting Separate Schools talked of supporting them because their faith and religious belief required them to do so—he told him that should they ever repeal these provisions, so that there should not be any Separate School law at all, there was not a single Roman Catholic Separate School that would the day thereafter be closed, and they could not be closed under the law. Now, he would point out where the cardinal point of the whole school law in this country was to be found. It was found in a couple of sections of the Public Schools Act. They were usually known as the compulsory sections. Sections 209 and 210 were the only sections in which, by any law of this Province hitherto passed or now in operation, any parent or guardian of a child was compelled to send the child to school at all. They could take the parent's or guardian's notes, and compel them, whether poor or rich, to pay towards the support of a school, but under those two sections, which formed the corner-stone of the whole system, and which directed whether a parent or guardian might or might not educate the child, there was nothing to compel him to send the child to any particular school. Section 209 said:—"The parent or guardian of every child not less than seven years nor more than thirteen years of age is required to cause such child to attend a Public School, or any other school in which elementary instruction is given, for the period of 100 days in each Public School year, unless there be some reasonable excuse for non-attendance." So that the parent or guardian

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