

the ordinary Public Schools. In quoting the other clauses, he stated that in one respect the Act was less generous, if he might use the term, than the Separate School Act, because once a man became a Separate School supporter he could not withdraw except he had given notice during a certain time in the year of his intention. So that there were on the statute book of the country provisions more ample and more liberal for the establishment of Protestant Separate Schools than there were for the establishment of Roman Catholic Separate Schools. It was no answer to his argument that it had not been done. He was not adducing it for the purpose of saying that it had not been done, but for the purpose of showing that those who said Roman Catholics enjoyed a privilege that was not extended to others were entirely mistaken. He could not quite understand why Protestant Separate Schools had not been established, unless it was that the Protestants were a large majority in the Province, and that, controlling the Public Schools as they did, they should be quite content to have them as their system. But there were cases where Protestant Separate Schools had been established. There were nine in the Province of Ontario, where, until two or three years ago, instead of the teacher requiring to be qualified, the Trustees could sign a certificate without even the formula of an examination. But suppose there were no such statute as the one he had quoted, he had for a long time been unable to understand why in the larger centres—for example, in the City of Toronto, where the schools were for the most part unmixed—there had not been more religious education imparted. There was no reason why there should not be. If there was all the tendency towards union of the Protestant denominations which it was stated there was, he had thought how was it possible, where there were not Roman Catholic pupils, and where the children of various Protestant denominations were together, that there was not more religious education, and that it could not be agreed upon. One could not if he would, nor dare not if he could, close his eyes to the fact that agnosticism and atheism were spreading a great deal in the world, and that these did not come from the farm, the hamlet or the township, but from the great centres of the population; and would it not be a good thing, instead of trying to abolish Separate Schools, if the Christian Churches of this Province, where they have the opportunity, without any demur being made, to were introduced into these Public Schools more of the religious teaching which in the end might save a good many from drifting from Christianity into the paths of agnosticism or atheism, or any of the other isms to which he had referred. The speaker next proceeded to give the reasons why the hon. gentleman had entered upon this crusade against Separate Schools. He did not think he needed to go further than his friend's London speech to find the reason. The hon. gentleman had been in this chamber during the time that all these various amendments had been made. If there was anything that his friends boasted of more than another it was that there was not a single item of legislation that his eye had not scanned; that he was there to put the dots over the i's and the crosses over the t's; that he was always eager and at his desk, and could detect anything that was of a false nature, and that any particular provision that required amendment he could put it right. Now, it must be a very great humiliation to him that these Separate School amendments had passed through the House without his knowing before what he might have accomplished. He thought he found the reason for his opposition now in what he had referred to to-day as

THE "SOLID VOTE,"

and that, as the Roman Catholics were against him and in favor of the Liberal Government of Ontario, he had nothing to gain from that set of the electorate, he could afford to take such a course as would give him increased support from Protestant recruits. He (Mr. Fraser) denied that there was any such thing, or ever had been such a thing, as a solid Roman Catholic vote in this Province or in the Dominion. Even the clergy were divided, and there had never been a time during which the Roman Catholic vote for any party or parties had been solid or nearly solid. Not only the laity were divided, but the clergy were divided in their politics, and the Bishops also, just as they had a right to be. In the old days the Catholics were found supporting Baldwin, and to-day the Roman Catholic allegiance to the Liberal party would have been about as it was then had it not been for this Separate School question. It was well known at the

of Confederation they were with the Conservative party. How did they come into Confederation? They came in with the Separate School system guaranteed. Next he referred to the calling of a Roman Catholic Convention in the City of Toronto, which was a lay move for the purpose of discussing the question of Roman Catholic patronage. His hon. friend told him that the Roman Catholics had a right to aspire. Yes, they had a right to aspire, but it was very rarely that they got there. It sounded well on the platforms, it went well at a convention, it had a very nice ring about it, but there was a great unwritten law that "blood is thicker than water," and where it was a matter of competition for a particular post it would be found that in the end there were very few offices for those who formed a religious minority. Friends of the hon. gentleman, when they went out into the back schoolhouses, were too prone to say the Catholics obtained too much; yet even under this Liberal Government, desirous as they had been to do what was right by the Roman Catholics, they had not been able to do it, simply because the underlying influences had been against them. The next movement of any consequence among the Roman Catholics took place after the election of 1871. The taking into the Government of Mr. Scott, as Commissioner of Crown Lands, was looked upon by a large section as a certain concession to what they were asking. Then, after that, a still further deviation from the ranks of hon. gentlemen opposite took place. He referred now to the platform laid down by the Orangemen of this Province prior to these Separate School amendments. In the Grand Lodge of Western Ontario that met at Hamilton in 1876 a political platform was adopted, which is quoted in another part of this report. He asked them, in the face of that platform, adopted by those who formed the strength of the Conservative party then as they did to-day, what might any intelligent Catholic be expected to do except to leave that party. In 1876, therefore, by reason of that platform, there left the ranks of the Conservative party a large body of Catholics, who joined the Liberal party and had remained with it ever since. But they did not all leave, not even then. There even then probably remained more than one-half the Roman Catholics following the hon. gentleman opposite. In order to see whether their separation from him had come about by perfectly natural stages, he proposed to take the elections of 1879 and 1883 and 1886. There were in this Province constituencies in which the Roman Catholics predominated and he intended to take these constituencies to demonstrate that in the election of 1879, even after these amendments, the hon. gentleman had as nearly as might be one-half the Catholic vote. In Dundas his supporter was elected (Mr. Broder.) The Roman Catholic vote in that constituency was very large, and they supported him then and still supported him, though not nearly so largely perhaps, now as they did in the election of 1879.

He said now that his only chance of success lay in driving out the Catholics from his party in the hope that he might gather in sufficient of others to compensate him, or more than compensate him, for their loss. Then Mr. Fraser returned to a review of the results of the election of 1879. He showed how in Essex North, in Glengarry, in Huron East, in Lanark, in Ottawa, in Peterborough West, in Prescott, in Russell, in Stormont, in North York, etc., in sixteen constituencies in all where the Roman Catholic vote is either in the majority or forms a very important factor in the contest, that vote ten years ago, so far from being, as was now charged, a unit in favor of the Liberals, was, so far as could be gathered, much more in favor of the Opposition than of the Government. In all these places the Roman Catholic vote had either secured the election for Mr. Meredith of a follower, who was in several cases a Roman Catholic himself, or had furnished a large proportion of the support which the Conservative candidate had secured. In Essex South Mr. Wigle had been returned to support Mr. Meredith, and in Glengarry Mr. McMaster, one of his warmest and most talented supporters, had been elected, both of them receiving the bulk of the Roman Catholic vote. Mr. Lees had been returned for Lanark nominally as an Independent, though he seemed upon coming into the House to forget that he had ever seen such a word as "independent," and had been constantly voting for Mr. Meredith. He, too, had had the largest share of the Roman Catholic vote of that constituency. In Ottawa, if the Roman Catholic vote was not in a majority, it was close upon it. Under the Manhood Suffrage Act he believed it would be in a majority. This constituency sent a Roman Catholic to support Mr.