

the hon. gentleman . . . simply declaring arbitrarily that the time has come for the ballot, would force upon the Separate Schools a compulsory ballot which the majority of Public Schools have not adopted, and which the supporters of the Separate Schools have not demanded. Why confine the compulsory ballot to Separate Schools? Why not carry it into Public and High School Board elections? Mr. Ross then cited the substantial progress made by the Separate Schools in the past 27 years, their teaching staff being doubled and many other improvements introduced. Mr. Ross then held that the Separate Schools do not need the ballot for purposes of administration. They can build their schools, hire their teachers, collect their rates and pay their dues without the ballot, and what more have they to do? The question arose whether Separate School supporters are under any terrorism. Did Mr. Meredith know of any such terrorism? If there was any terrorism there was something terribly wrong, and to eliminate the terrorism the classes exercising it would have to be eliminated. Mr. Meredith had said that the solid Roman Catholic vote was against him, in elections decided by the ballot, and he was so intensely logical that he thought the ballot was necessary for the Separate School Boards. Who would exercise the terrorism but the hierarchy? In that case it was the hierarchy which had to be dealt with, to be abolished. It was charged that the Separate School Boards were under clerical control. Well, clerical control might be bad or good. Many High School Boards are officered by Protestant clergymen; is that clerical intimidation? Is it held that that clerical control is injurious to the schools? If it is injurious, not the Separate Schools alone, but the entire Roman Catholic system, must be proscribed. It was natural for clergymen to assert themselves, and the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church thought they should exercise a certain guardianship which Protestant clergymen do not exercise. As far as the speaker could judge, they usually exercised it for the good of the schools, in securing increased and regular attendance. It devolved upon the hon. gentlemen opposite to prove that there was any intimidation. When the ballot was applied to Parliamentary elections, there were employers of labor who were interested in the issue of those elections, and who led their workmen in platoons to the polls. The ballot was given as a protection to these coerced classes, and it had worked grandly. Open voting, however, is in accordance with the

traditions of the race, and is convenient, and there is no reason why it should not be retained unless there are men in a position of influence who make it their business to thwart the will of the people. When such interference is proved to exist in Public or Separate School elections, no man would be more ready to grant the protection of the ballot than the speaker, who was the guardian of the children's education. The country is passing through a peculiar period of its development, Mr. Ross went on. In the early history of a nation it is of the first importance to have the foundations well laid. He felt that the religious atmosphere was not what it should be; that there were cross-currents, aerolites, comets, and other phenomena, which made for disintegration; and the responsibility for such a state of affairs lay with the hon. gentlemen opposite. For years every amendment to the Public and Separate School acts was concurred in by them, they evidently feeling that they were in accord with the interests of the country. But at last some spirit seemed to take possession of them, and they reached out for every advantage they could get, despite the importance of tranquillity and good-will to the country. In 1886 The Mail, their strong supporter, launched out into an active campaign, the effect of which was to promote religious strife. Instead of repudiating the utterances of The Mail, the hon. gentlemen opposite seemed perfectly ready to accept them. In 1886, a few months before the election of that year, The Mail had published articles, from which he would take the following extracts:—

On August 17 it described the Roman Catholic Church as "an aggressive and rapacious ecclesiasticism."

August 23—"The tentacles of the church are felt by the English settler in all things, great and small."

"The church is propped and buttressed by many hoary acts, and is without doubt the most unique and the most oppressive institution of its kind on the face of the earth."

October 4—"The church is seeking to build up, not a British, but a French community."

October 13—"The wonderful fecundity and cohesiveness of the French-Canadian race and its entire subjection to the church, whose bottle-holding is always judicious, make Jean Baptiste a formidable competitor for the soil of a new country. . . . The impeachment of the Dominion Cabinet for having allowed the law to take its course in the case of Riel is nothing more or less than an uprising

on the part of French-Canadian nativism and intolerance against the supremacy of British institutions."

October 18—"In our humble judgment the time has come for a general uprising of the British race in the Dominion against so dangerous and degrading a system of government" (referring to the influence of the church in Quebec).

November 6—Referring to the amendments made to the Separate Schools acts The Mail said:—"If it be asked, What have Protestants to do with the question? the obvious answer is that the power which has just succeeded in securing a British law for keeping Catholic parents and Catholic children down is only waiting its chance to impair Protestant liberties. . . . Albeit her schools, like the Public Schools, receive State aid, the law grants her the right, free from any State inspection or interference, to poison the minds of the children against British institutions by means of anti-British compilations of history."

November 15—"The sale of the Catholic vote has for years been one of the most humiliating and at the same time one of the most dangerous and demoralizing features of Federal and Provincial politics."

November 22—The Mail concluded a long article, referring to the alleged feeling against Separate Schools, as follows:—"The movement would, perhaps, in time become so general as to warrant our rulers in sweeping away the Separate Schools altogether, a consummation that must be brought about before we can talk seriously of building up a united Canada."

December 2—"Why does the church not give Catholics better schools? Why does she obtain a law from Mr. Mowat virtually compelling them to keep away from the Public School and to support the Separate School, which is confessedly an inferior institution? Above all, why does she train them to herd together as a separate and distinct people, and why does she from time to time humiliate them in the sight of all men by disposing of them to the party, Reform or Tory, which offers her the highest price? . . . And what is to be thought of the Protestant clergy who, as a body, are sitting idly by whilst she is poisoning the wells of popular education?"

It would be noticed, said Mr. Ross, that the tone of the articles became stronger as the elections came nearer. This was the literature that was being circulated just prior to the election of 1886. Speaking at London on nomination day, December 21, 1886, Mr. Meredith had expressed himself as follows in regard to these utterances:—

"Then, sir, an attempt is being made to make political capital out of the course of The Mail newspaper. It has been said that the Conservative party has been raising in this country the 'No-Popery' cry. It has been said that the Conservative party attempted to raise again those cries of sectarian hate and bigotry which were raised in days gone by. I utterly repudiate that they have done anything of the kind in this country. I repeat it, that men who would raise a cry of that kind for the purpose of getting into power are men who should not be entrusted with it."

"Mr. Jas. Mills—Do you repudiate The Mail?"

"Mr. Meredith—Does Mr. Mills repudiate The Globe? I have laid my platform before the citizens of London, and upon that I am prepared to stand or fall. . . . It is said that I propose to do away with the Separate Schools of this Province. I deny that, and the man who makes that charge in the face of my address to the electors, in which I would maintain them and increase their efficiency, is an unjust and unfair man. (Cheers.) As I said before, I am prepared to be judged by my record and statements and nothing else. The men who raised this cry must tancy that the people are not intelligent. This privilege is guaranteed to Roman Catholics and they shall have their Separate Schools. No man could take them away, however much he might desire to do so; but I do not propose to do anything of the kind. I declare it is the duty of any Government in the Province of Ontario to make these schools as efficient as possible that they may fulfil the purpose for which they were established."—The Daily Free Press, London, December 22, 1886.

Mr. Ross pointed out that Mr. Meredith had had the opportunity of repudiating The Mail, but had declined to commit himself one way or the other. Yet, in face of these utterances, and of the fact that this paper had ever since supported hon. gentlemen opposite, they would now assert they were not seeking to stir up religious feeling and were only disposed to deal fairly by their Roman Catholic fellow-citizens. Now, take the election of 1890. He would quote again from a speech delivered in February, 1890, by Mr. Meredith in London. The hon. gentleman had spoken as follows:—"Is there not a great danger to the State in this solid compact of the minority, and in the great heat there is between the parties swaying from one side to the other and exacting from that other what that other's conscience could not give without the support of that compact minority? I say that is one