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would in the latter case bear all the expense themselves, yet it would be preferable to the municipal system, as provided by the bill as it now stands. Besides, by giving the Separate School trustees the right to name their own returning officers and time and place of polling (properly regulated), it cannot be said that in this regard any right the Separate School supporters now have under the union act is taken away. That is the point I desire to safeguard, it is the point about which the minority are most anxious; they would not, I am sure, approve of any infringement of their rights under the union act. To them these rights are sacred; they prize them highly, and to anyone who would encroach upon them or seek to undermine them they would at once say hands off. No one need flatter himself that these schools can be abolished or even impaired by hostile hands without a struggle, and such a struggle as this country has never yet seen.

I propose also to provide in respect to the finding of the County Judge in cases of application to the courts as to corrupt practices and other matters affecting the elections, that a return shall be made to the Separate School Board. The only other change of importance is in regard to the means by which the ballot system may be adopted in any school section. The bill now leaves it in the control of the majority of the trustees, but as the existing trustees were not elected with such powers, it would be unfair to those they represent to give them such control. I had intended from the first not to bring the bill into operation until there would be a new election, but as a part only of the School Boards retires annually this plan is surrounded with some difficulty. Yet it would not be fair to cut out the people from expressing their views on the question. This was also pointed out by the leader of the Opposition as one objection to the bill in its present form. I propose to amend the bill so as to give the Separate School supporters the right to pass upon the question by inserting a provision that upon the presentation of a petition, signed by a certain number, the trustees shall submit the question to a vote of the Separate School electors of the section as to whether the ballot system shall or shall not be adopted, or by deferring the coming into operation of the bill until new elections take place, making them general, so that the people could elect trustees favorable to the ballot if they so desired; but these are matters of detail that can be arranged by the committee.

By affording the means by which the minority of their own free choice can, if they so desire, use the ballot to elect these Separate School trustees, there can be no infringement of any right which Catholics enjoyed at the union; nothing is taken away, but something additional is offered, of which they may, if they please, avail themselves. It may be contended that a precedent for going further might be established by this action; but where the free will of the parties interested is maintained how can a precedent for overruling that free will be created, or how can these rights be impaired? I know that a great many leading Catholics desire the legislation I propose. I feel certain it is in the best interests of the Separate Schools and of the Catholic people, as well as of the general public. I know also that, like all other reforms, it must in the end be passed, and I desire it to pass without more strife or ill-will than has been already aroused.

Holding these views, I can only press my measure forward, trusting that the good sense of the House will assert itself, and that the measure will have a unanimous support.

I come now to speak of the general question, and as to that we have already had only a few days since a discussion as to the constitutional rights of Catholics under the British North America act. I prefer to discuss the matter from what I conceive to be the attitude and policy of the two great parties, the Conservative and the Liberal party. The policy of hon. gentlemen opposite is actuated, I fear, by a desire for office, and by a determination to abolish so far as possible every vestige of Separate School rights guaranteed to Catholics under the union act, while the attitude of the Liberal party is one of principle. They say, and truly, "We did not make this law, we found it on the statute book when we came to office; it is a solemn contract bearing the sanction of our Sovereign, and we will not violate the constitutional rights of our Catholic fellow-citizens; under it such a course would be a stultification of the principles upon which the Liberal party rests; rather would we give place and power than oppress the conscience of our Catholic fellow-countrymen."

#### TWO DISTINCT POLICIES.

These, sir, are two distinct policies, the truth of which I think is abundant, and of the justice of which the people can readily judge. That the policy of the hon. gentlemen opposite is about what I have outlined it to be I think I can make clear. The World reports the leader of the Op-

position, when speaking lately of the probable result of the next election and of the support hitherto given the Government as using these words:—"The Government has had the vast mass of a great religious body behind their backs, but this time hon. gentlemen opposite would not have all these elements in their favor. The people were awakening, and he ventured to say that at the next election these hon. gentlemen would have different elements to reckon with." Continuing, he predicts their defeat and then states that "he and his party would then have an opportunity of showing the country that in office they would practise the principles they had advocated out of office." Is it for fear that hon. gentlemen opposite would be foolish enough to attempt to put these so-called principles into practice that the people have not yet entrusted them with office? However that may be, it is not difficult to understand the element to which the hon. gentleman alludes in this connection, and which he expects to put them in office. Besides, we have the further evidence that he has the support in this House of at least two members who have identified themselves with the platform of the P. P. A. party, which is called the new element, but which I regard as the new conspiracy against the rights of Catholics.

I regret to have to discuss a matter so disagreeable, but some meaning must be attached to the words and acts of the hon. gentleman. I do not pretend to be in his confidence; I shall leave the facts to speak for themselves; but I intend to show to the House that he is most inconsistent, and that his statements are not always to be relied upon.

He usually disclaims any desire to raise the no-Popery cry, or to infringe upon the rights of his Catholic fellow-subjects, but at the same time he deliberately proceeds to force upon them his own views regardless of those rights or opinions which he so loudly professes to respect.

What is the position of the hon. gentleman? Is he not trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds? He is reported to have used these words:—"Never had a member of the Opposition uttered a word that would jar on the feelings of any Roman Catholic; never had they attacked the religion of any man; never had they attempted to ostracize any man on account of his faith." These were noble words, and I regret that I cannot accept them as conclusive, and that he himself has disparaged them. This I will show before I sit down. But I wish to point out to the hon. gentleman that in this language, while he was loud as to his former course, he was suspiciously silent as to what his course would be in the future. What he has done is a matter of record. What he may do in the future is what we are anxious about, and that is just what he avoids speaking of. If these words were consistently uttered what are we to understand by what follows in the next sentence when he says:—"Yet while this was the case, they could not be prevented by any such false charge" (referring to the charge of bigamy to which he had previously alluded) "from raising their voice against what they believe to be an encroachment upon the rights of the majority, and an injustice to the people in this Province." Is not this presenting both sides of the shield in a most glaring manner? The junior member for Toronto can grow eloquent over it, when, with that extensive choice of language and accuracy of vision for which he is so noted he expounds it to his brethren, the P.P.A. The member for Kent will, no doubt, look wise and contented when referring to his part of the programme, and so the mill grinds on for the benefit of the party. But where is the injustice to which the hon. gentleman alluded? Where and when and in what manner has there been an encroachment on the rights of the majority? Has he shown it? Why, he has not even attempted to show it; he has made a bald assertion without the slightest attempt to prove it. Where is his justification for this unjust and mischievous insinuation? Does he imagine that he can trifle with the understanding of the people of this country? Does he regard Catholics as such dupes as to be deceived by empty words, that were in a moment overshadowed by an unjust attack and by a declaration of hostility unmistakable and ill-concealed? If we want more evidence as to where he himself stands, The World gives it to us. It reports him as using these words: "It should be his proud boast, if he led his party in the coming contest, that there should be inscribed on the banners of the party the resolutions and principles of the policy upon which they fought the last election."

Sir, what were the principles upon which that campaign was fought? Was it not war upon the Catholics of this Province? Who is the member upon this side of the House that had not to resist and refute the slanders levelled against the Government by Conservative speakers and workers from one end of this Province to the other, that they were truckling to the Catholic hierarchy? And have we not the further evidence of the principles upon