

FRENCH SCHOOL SYSTEM BETTER

Compliance With Law in Bilingual Schools, Says Hon. G. H. Ferguson

MORE TEACHERS TRAINING

Appropriation of \$100,000 Proposed for Investigation of Fuel Situation.

Conditions in the English-French schools of the Province are very much improved, according to Hon. G. Howard Ferguson, acting Minister of Education, who made a statement in the Legislature yesterday when the sum of \$2,355 was being voted for training schools at Ottawa, Sturgeon Falls, Vankleek Hill and Sandwich.

"Outside of the city of Ottawa the improvement is very marked," said Mr. Ferguson, "not only with regard to the schools complying with the law, but also with regard to the standard of the English-French teachers. Even in Ottawa there is a much more sincere effort to comply with the requirements of the law. In the schools in Ottawa the inspector has been admitted, and while in some cases the regulations have not been complied with, there is a better effort to instruct the children in the English language.

Teachers in Training.

"Those in charge seem to have become imbued with the idea that the department regards the matter seriously from the standpoint of educating the children. About thirty-five per cent. of the English-French schools in existence are complying absolutely with the laws and appear to be content with the results obtained. Even in the training schools we have more teachers in training than we ever had before, and they are better and more mature. There are about 103 teachers in training and satisfactory progress is evidently being made."

Mr. Wm. McDonald (North Bruce)—I heard a gentleman state on the public platform the other day that there were two schools in the Province in which not one word of English was being taught.

Mr. Mageau (Sturgeon Falls) — That is not true of the schools in Sturgeon Falls and Nipissing, and I doubt if the gentleman in question was well-informed. There is not a French-Canadian in Canada who has got his full senses who is not prepared to give his children a full knowledge of the English language.

Dr. Forbes Godfrey, member for West York, a well-known Orangemen and brother of John M. Godfrey of "Bonne Entente" fame—if the member for Sturgeon Falls would speak like that on St. Jean Baptist day in Sturgeon Falls, and if his compatriots would follow suit, there would be no bilingual problem in Ontario. (Government applause.) The hon. member made a speech in his constituency in which he said he was neither Bleu nor Rouge, but just a Frenchman. I am glad he has had a change of heart.

Mr. Mageau—I won't allow any member of this House to say that I have made on any occasion remarks that differed from the remarks I have just uttered. I never said the words the member for West York just quoted.

Conditions Claimed Satisfactory.

Mr. Racine (Russell) said they were strongly in favor of their children learning the English language, and he offered to accompany the

member for North Bruce on his visit to the two schools where no English is taught.

"They must be German schools," observed Mr. Pinard, Ottawa.

Mr. Ducharme of North Essex asked the Minister if any report had reached the Department of Education regarding conditions mentioned by the member for North Bruce.

"We have no report exactly in the words of my hon. friend," said Mr. Ferguson. "Our reports are to the effect that the regulations are not being complied with."

Mr. Pinard said every school in Ottawa was doing very well, and the only complaint of the inspectors was with respect to Regulation 17. "We are doing our best to learn the English language, and the Government should refund to the Ottawa School Board the grants withheld during the past year or two.

The estimates were then passed.

Investigate Fuel Situation.

Sir William Hearst told Mr. Ducharme that a vote of \$20,000 in the Agricultural Department was to pay for sixty moving-picture machines at a cost of \$125 each.

Mr. George C. Hurdman, Ottawa, asked how the Government intended to use the \$100,000 in the estimates for the manufacture and development of fuel. He asked if a Commission would be appointed.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson, Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines, said that at the Ottawa conference the suggestion had been made that a Provincial Fuel Commission should be named. The amount of \$100,000 is to cover the investigation into sources of fuel supply, with a view to relieving the present stringent situation. He said that the Government had given permission to municipalities to go into a certain area at Algonquin Park and cut wood for the relief of citizens, provided it is sold at cost. The Government didn't want municipalities or citizens to think that the fuel situation was anything but acute.

As several members of the House wished to discuss the fuel question the item was allowed to stand, and the House adjourned.