

Thus I do not see any reason for omitting the clause relating to education in the Northwest Territories Act from any Act establishing provinces in the Northwest Territories, provided that no further powers are given. If the latter are suggested I think all friends of public education should oppose them. If it is the intention of the Dominion government to insert any clause at all regarding education, personally I think the whole matter could be left to the provinces themselves, I am of opinion that the maximum allowed at present should remain the maximum. I have not had time to look up the bearing of the British North America Act on the question, but consider that when the Northwest Territories Act was framed the provisions of the British North America Act were considered and their purport incorporated in the educational clause of the Northwest Territories Act. I would say, then, insert this clause if the matter from political expediency must be dealt with, if not leave the whole business to the Territories, opposing every proposition of an enactment that would subject us to the separate school system as it exists in the east.

I trust what I have written will be of some use to you, and I am much gratified by the opportunity you have given me of placing the matter before you. I regret that I have had to write in such haste.

Kindest wishes for yourself and family.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) AUGUSTUS H. BALL.

Now, from what has been said before, and from the description given in the letter which I have just read as to the working of the present law in the Territories, I think any reasonable man would agree with me that the present law is what we want continued when we become a province, and we would like this to be definite and so explicitly stated in the Act and in such simple and plain language that there could be no doubt as to the meaning and interpretation thereof. So many laws are framed in such ambiguous language that no ordinary man can understand them, and as an eminent judge once informed me in regard to the working of a certain law, that no person could tell anything about it, and that it would all depend upon what judge had the last guess at it. So I consider this case. If in the constitution that is being framed for us at the present time nothing definite is laid down in regard to this matter of education, we will be like a ship without a rudder and it will require a long period of unrest, agitation and legal proceedings before we will know where we are at, and I venture to say that no man living can at present predict where we would land, but that in all probability we would find ourselves thrown back to the Act of 1875 with its dual system of education.

I am personally in favour of strictly speaking public schools, but in Mackenzie district we have Protestants and Roman Catholics, and I am satisfied that a large majority of the leaders among these people desire religious teaching in the public schools; and I as their representative would be recreant to the trust reposed in me, if

Mr. CASH.

I did not represent both sections of these people. While the Roman Catholics are in the minority, they are a very respectable minority, and I think in giving them the same privilege where they are in majority or minority, as we give the Protestants under similar conditions, we are only doing that which is fair and honourable between man and man. I therefore am heartily in accord with the educational clause of the present Bill.

One thing more, Mr. Speaker, it has been asserted over and over again, that this Bill is an interference with the provincial rights of the new province. So far as I can see, nobody is in favour of absolute provincial rights. In the Bill now under consideration, there is a more violent interference with provincial rights than is found in the educational clauses. I mean the refusal to allow the provinces to tax the Canadian Pacific Railway in violation of the exemption granted by the parliament of 1881. This is a violent interference with provincial rights, yet no one in this House or out of it, suggests that this parliament should not keep faith with the Canadian Pacific Railway. The granting of the exemption by the Conservative government of 1881 was a most unrighteous act as far as the Territories were concerned, but no one desires to see parliament repudiate its obligations, and hon. gentlemen opposite have not raised a single howl about this interference with provincial rights. They recognize that under certain circumstances, and in the presence of certain conditions, it is not only advisable, but necessary, to make an exception to the doctrine of provincial rights, and they consider the Canadian Pacific Railway exemption as one.

The leader of the opposition suggests another violent interference with provincial rights, when he suggests that the lands be given to the provinces with a provision attached that the provinces shall not be allowed to deal with them as they deem best, but that they must continue the system of free homestead grant, and be restricted in the price at which they can sell lands. Now, could there be a more gross interference with provincial rights, and not only is it an interference with provincial rights, but it is a slap at the people of the Territories? It is simply telling them, that they are not fit to be trusted to manage their own affairs, so far as the lands are concerned. We have listened to hon. gentlemen opposite day after day, as they loudly proclaimed that the people of the new provinces were perfectly fit and entitled to manage their own affairs in the matter of education. Yet in the matter of lands, gentlemen opposite practically say this is not so. What does it all mean, Mr. Speaker? It means that hon. gentlemen opposite, as well as hon. gentlemen on this side recognize that there are circumstances and conditions under which the