

to avoid the introduction of this unfortunate question into the political arena?

Now, Sir, the position unfortunately is this, that, as I said a few moments ago, the right hon. gentleman has by his own act practically blotted out clause 3 from section 93 of the British North America Act, and therefore it is that at such a time as this we should endeavour to legislate, not in the spirit suggested by the right hon. gentleman the other evening, as representing individual constituencies, but legislate as representatives of the people of Canada. When the right hon. gentleman was speaking he pointed out that it would be impossible to do certain things, for instance, to extend the boundaries of Manitoba, because the representatives of the Northwest objected to that. Now, I object for my part to such an interpretation of our duties as that. I submit that we shall certainly come to grief if we cannot in the first instance, understand our own duties and responsibilities here. We are here as representatives, not primarily of our individual constituencies; every man sitting in this House is the representative of all the people of Canada, and I claim to represent the people of the Northwest just as much as any gentleman coming from the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. And when the right hon. gentleman is prepared to adopt the views of seven gentlemen from those Territories, gentlemen elected on different lines altogether, without regard to this question in deciding the future of that great country which at no distant day must hold the balance of power in this Dominion, I can only say on that point emphatically, that I differ from him. If we could induce the right hon. gentleman, assisted perhaps by the ex-Minister of the Interior—because we would be delighted to have his assistance, though we would want to have it before we got very far away, because he might change his mind before we met again—if we could possibly induce the premier to be guided in some way by considerations of the trifling character of the change suggested in the schools as pointed out, though a tremendous change as some people think, surely something might be done to avoid this difficulty. Something has been said about the law of 1875 being a law under which the people were induced to go into the Northwest, and that they have a right to believe that it will be maintained. Now I would like to ask the ex-Minister of the Interior how many of his Doukhobors or Galicians could he name to-day who went to the Northwest because they had read the parliamentary debate of 1875, and were satisfied that their school rights would be maintained? If by any possibility any weight were to be attached to that argument—which I do not think the hon. gentleman himself really considered as an argument, I myself took it merely as one of his

pleasantries—if there were any weight to be attached to that argument, then at least the same weight must be attached to the opinion of men of the standing of the Hon. David Mills, and Sir Louis Davies, and Sir John Thompson, who all said that when parliament came to form the provinces it would be perfectly free to do as it saw fit.

Now, before discussing the subject itself, let me consider one or two remarks of the ex-Minister of the Interior. When the hon. gentleman was speaking of the causes that led him to withdraw from the government, he pointed out that the original clause as introduced by the government had a certain meaning, and that subsequently it was modified so that he could accept it. The hon. gentleman pointed out that in the first instance the difference between what he wanted and what he got was so great that he was compelled to lay down the seals of office, to abandon all the patronage and emoluments of office, and to sink down to the level of an ordinary member, and all for conscience. But what was it the hon. gentleman had to salve his conscience for all these serious losses? I think if I remember his language correctly he said there was a possibility that if a university were endowed, there might be a discussion as to the rights of the respective parties as to a share in the money. Then the hon. gentleman said that under the original clause as introduced, all the provisions of the Act of 1875 were also enacted. Now if the hon. gentleman will look at the 1875 Act, he will find there is nothing in that Act whatever that provides machinery by which these schools shall be carried on. The 1875 Act says in effect that Protestant and Roman Catholics, respectively, whenever in a minority, are to be allowed to have separate schools, are to be allowed to appropriate their own taxation to the support of their schools, and are not to be compelled to support any other schools. That is all there was in the Act of 1875. There was not a word in it about giving the Roman Catholic hierarchy charge of the schools, there was not a word in it about this, that or the other regulation, or ordinance, but the local authorities were to be allowed to do as they saw fit, except that they must not interfere with the rights of minorities to have their own separate schools, be they Protestant or Roman Catholic, and to apply their own taxation for their maintenance. Subsequently the hon. gentleman pointed out that certain changes were made by the local authorities. Now would the hon. gentleman pretend to say that anybody whose opinion was worth considering ever thought that the local authorities which had passed those ordinances had not the right to repeal them? They passed them, they existed for a time, and they repealed them, and that is all there was about it. And if the Act as first introduced had gone into effect, the