

the day, the dogmas and tenets of the Catholic church shall be taught. Now, I am free to say that I believe that it would be better if there were no separate schools either in the province of Ontario or in the province of Quebec. If the children all went to one school it would be better for all hands. But I do not see that we in the province of Ontario are suffering very severely because of the existence of separate schools in that province. In the constituency I have the honour to represent, there is only one separate school. A few years ago there were several. But the people found that these schools were expensive and that the children trained in them were not receiving as good an education as they would receive if they attended the public schools. And so, in the rural parts of the county, they have united with the public schools; and to-day there is only one separate school in the whole riding of Centre York. In a short time, I am confident, the separate schools will be confined to the cities and larger towns. In the rural districts where the population is about equally divided between Protestant and Catholic it is a misfortune to have two schools. It weakens both; it destroys the usefulness of both. But, as I have said, in the rural districts the separate schools are becoming a thing of the past, and I cannot see that we in Ontario are suffering very much because of the existence of the separate schools—I do not believe we are suffering at all. There is no province in the Dominion where the people are better educated than they are in Ontario. The laws are well observed and the administration of justice is all that could be desired, and, in every way, the province of Ontario stands at the head of all the provinces in this vast Dominion. And no country in the world has a better system of education than we have in the province of Ontario. At the great exhibition in Chicago, Buffalo and St. Louis the educational system of Ontario was praised and admired by every country in the world. In the United States there is not a single state that has not been copying the educational laws of Ontario. So while I say, that in my opinion, it would be in the interest of the province if separate schools were done away with and we had only one school system a national system, I say that if our Catholic friends desire, as they have a right under the British North America Act, to continue that system, it is for them to say. I point this out to show what is a separate school and to show that the reason why they are separate is because of the religious instruction they give. In the province of Ontario it would be very hard if Protestants were obliged to send their children to the separate schools, because the religion that is taught in those schools is not acceptable to the Protestant. Now, what is the system

160

first established in the Northwest Territories? And is the system so established the one we are continuing in the Northwest? Not at all. I have in my hand the ordinances passed by the Northwest Territories themselves. As I have said, the Act of 1875 gave the territorial government power to establish separate schools, and they did establish them. They had the dual system, and from 1875 to 1891 one class of schools carried on by Catholics and the other by Protestants. But in 1891, the territorial government, believing that this system was not the best for that country, that it was an expensive system, that in that vast region where the population was few and far between the number of children of school age must necessarily be very small, they found that continuing a system of dual schools as not only expensive, but that it was not meeting the wishes of the people or accomplishing the object they desired. So in 1891 they abolished this system altogether, and established a system that to my mind seems to be one of the best national school systems to be found in any country in the world. What is that system? The whole management and control of education in the Northwest is placed in the hands of a minister of the Crown called the Commissioner of Education. He has power to make laws in relation to all these schools. What are the duties and his powers? I find in reading clause 3 of the Northwest ordinances passed in the year 1891, that it creates a Department of Education, in these words:

There shall be a department of the public service of the Territories called the Department of Education, over which the member of the Executive Council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the seal of the Territories, to discharge the functions of the Commissioner of Education for the time being shall preside.

#### Clause 4 reads:

The department shall have the control and management of all kindergarten schools, public and separate schools, normal schools, teachers' institutes and the education of deaf, deaf mute and blind persons.

5. The commissioner shall have the administration, control and management of the department, and shall oversee and direct the officers, clerks and servants thereof.

#### Regulations of the Department.

6. The commissioner, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, shall have power:

1. To make regulations of the department—
  - (a) For the classification, organization, government, examination and inspection of all schools hereinbefore mentioned;
  - (b) For the construction, furnishing and care of school buildings, and the arrangement of school premises;
  - (c) For the examination, licensing and grading of teachers, and for the examination of persons who may desire to enter professions, or