

been settled so far as Mr. Dalton McCarthy was concerned, having been relegated to the Territorial government to deal with as they saw fit. Mr. Dalton McCarthy did not seek to raise the race or religious cry, but simply said: Let us hand over this matter to the local authorities to deal with exclusively, and you will have peace and harmony; you will not have constant friction arising in this House and in the country. However, Sir John Thompson would not acquiesce in the demands made to relegate either to the province of Manitoba or to the government of the Territories the right to deal with their educational questions. Therefore, in 1894, a Bill was introduced in this House by Mr. Dalton McCarthy to repeal the separate school clauses of the Northwest Territories Act, section 14 being the section I have quoted. Quite a long debate took place on that motion; and according to my way of thinking that debate is the pivot upon which the discussion of this question almost wholly turns. That debate was so important, it had so much to do with the question now before us, that I am amazed that hon. gentlemen opposite have not devoted more time and attention to it, because their leader at that time made the situation clear and plain. In that year, Sir John Thompson speaking in answer to Mr. Dalton McCarthy, said, as will be found at page 6127 of 'Hansard' of that year:

One other important characteristic was to be considered in regard to the Territories while they were to remain in the Territorial condition, and that was in view of the peculiar circumstances of the Territories, the fact that we were inviting all races, creeds and denominations, there was to be the widest toleration while the Territories existed.

That was the corner stone of the whole; the corner stone which the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) proposes to remove, on the ground that there can be no good reason given for its existence. As the hon. leader of the opposition has said to-night, no man knew better than those who were engaged in framing the Act of 1875, the difficulties which sectarian disputes might create in that new country. No one realized better the fact, that in so far as the population was to be gathered into the Territories from the older provinces, it was to be gathered from different races, and from amongst men who had strong lines of difference as regards religious belief. While the population should be going in there, and while the Territories should remain under our control at least, there was to be the broadest toleration for every belief, and for the races, as regards worship, and as regards language, and as regards instruction in the schools.

Then further he says:

It is just as much a matter of sound policy now as it was in 1875, that toleration should exist there, and that we should extend the broadest invitation to the people of different races and religions to come and settle there with a perfect sense of toleration; and it matters not how many people in the past have availed themselves of our invitation. The bad

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faith this parliament would show in repealing a provision of that kind, while the territorial system existed at least, would be just as great as if the population who availed themselves of our pledge and relied on that system to-day, were only thirteen instead of 13,000.

Then further he says:

We claim therefore that the constitutional system which was established with regard to schools and with regard to language in 1875 ought to be maintained for the same reasons as those which dictated its creation, and that this condition of affairs should last, at least, while the affairs of the Territories are under control of this parliament. What the constitution of the future provinces should be, in view of the pledges which have been referred to, or in view of any other set of circumstances, will be for parliament to decide when it decides to create those provinces. I hope, therefore, that the House will be careful to-day not to disturb the arrangement so wisely made in 1875, and which is as useful to the Territories now as it was then.

These are the words of Sir John Thompson, then the leader of the Conservative party, and Attorney General of Canada. In reply to him, Mr. McCarthy sounded a note of warning in these words:

Then if we do not give them power to choose, if we deny them the right to select for themselves, then, when the day comes, as it must before long, when some part of the Territories will ask for admission and be entitled by their population and position to have this clause enacted, then this parliament would be bound to repeal the law, otherwise we should be, as I say, riveting the system of separate schools upon them. This point I think a most important one.

Then the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), who has always been sincere on this question, likewise sounded a note of warning:

I agree with the assumption advanced that if we allow usages to grow up for a length of time, in proportion to their duration they will be difficult to remove. They were given by the Act of 1875 the right to establish separate schools there. It might happen, afterwards, when we establish a province there and give the legislature the full autonomy of a provincial legislature, that we could not do away with the order of things then existing.

Then, Sir, Mr. McCarthy was not satisfied with what the hon. leader of the government had said: he, Sir John Thompson having made it plain, if I read his language aright, that if he Sir John Thompson were sitting here to-day he would be in favour of fastening the separate school system upon the Northwest provinces, taking the ground that if the reasons which had prevailed in 1875 were good reasons in 1894 I do not see how he could come to any other conclusion than that they were good reasons in 1905. Mr. McCarthy said that Sir John Thompson was ambiguous in his statement as to what would happen when the time came for granting autonomy. Sir John