

In the course of the same interview he says :

The Territories had arrived at a working arrangement, and should be left in charge of the system.

Precisely what we propose doing by this Bill, Mr. Speaker. Later on he says :

Their experience—

That is, the experience of the Territories.

—proved that they had arrived at a working plan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there also was an opinion expressed some three years ago by the hon. gentleman who has just laid down the seals of office as Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton). This expression was made long prior to any promise of legislation for the Northwest Territories, it was not made in the heat of debate but was made casually and no doubt expressed the mind of that gentleman at that time and I have no doubt at this time. The hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton), speaking in 1902, said of the Northwest schools :

I know of no political game that can be played, and so far as the separate schools are concerned, my own view is that the school question is settled.

I understand that the settlement at which they, the Northwest Territories, have arrived—and I am very happy to be able to express an opinion—is a satisfactory settlement, and that the Roman Catholic people on the one hand and the Protestant people on the other feel that they have made a satisfactory compromise and that there is no necessity for difficulty or agitation upon the question.

That opinion was given some three years ago and it must be taken to be authoritative and much value must be attached to it. The Toronto 'Globe,' which does not see eye to eye with the government as to this measure, took the trouble to send a correspondent to the Territories before these Bills were introduced. That correspondent travelled throughout the length and breadth of the Territories and endeavoured to adduce public opinion generally upon the matter of the schools. I feel sure that the opinions gathered by that correspondent are unbiased. He, himself, judging from the tone particularly of letter No. 4, written to the 'Globe' is not particularly in favour of the government's proposition. Therefore, we may take it that the opinions are unbiased and that weight and value can be attached to them. I find that he interviewed Mr. Alderman May at Edmonton in the beginning of March. Mr. May was the acting mayor and a supporter of public schools :

He, Mr. May, does not, however, find that the privileges which the minority enjoy occasion any trouble or harm. He sees, moreover, that to withdraw them would cause a great deal of bitter feeling which there is no good reason for incurring.

'Some people say,' said Mr. May, 'that the privileges the minority enjoy are so insignifi-

cant that the separate school will soon die out, but I do not care whether it does or not. It is fairly satisfactory to our Roman Catholic neighbours, or at all events they have made up their minds that they have the full extent of the privileges which they could possibly get from any legislative body in this country. That being the case, there is a perfect understanding and peaceable relations between the two sections of the community, and I think that the eastern sectarians have no right to come in here and disturb that peace.

I commend that last sentence, pregnant with meaning, to the careful attention of some of my hon. friends opposite and particularly to the newspaper press of the city of Toronto. Let me read the Regina opinion, and this opinion was given prior to the distribution of those blank petitions to the House of Commons that were sent out from Ontario to the Northwest Territories in order to raise and fan into flame an agitation there over this question. This opinion comes from Regina and is also reported by the 'Globe' correspondent :

Their attitude—

Referring to the attitude of the people of Regina.

—towards the school question is similar. Without exception all those I have spoken to have no apprehensions with regard to that feature of the settlement. They know by experience the system they have got. They are perfectly satisfied with it, and if its continuance is a part of the settlement there will be no objection from the people of the Territories. The Catholic portion of the population have at times exhibited dissatisfaction, but it has never been very serious, and the general expression is that if the present system is continued, practically everybody will be satisfied.

That is a statement of the opinion of the citizens of Regina as gathered by the 'Globe' correspondent who, as I have said, is not favourable to this legislation. Furthermore this 'Globe' correspondent went to Medicine Hat, farther west, I believe, in the Territories and this, as far as he could gather, was the view of the citizens of that enterprising western town :

The separate school is sometimes inferior to the public school from the point of view of what is regarded as its main purpose, namely, to impart secular education. But this is regarded with some placidity for two reasons : first, because there is the feeling that those who prefer the separate school are getting what they want, and, in the next place, that the provincial authorities hold the master key to the situation in possessing the right to inspect and approve or disapprove of the way a school is fulfilling the great end of its existence....

If a separate school in Ontario is inferior in any way there is really no effective means of compelling it to come up to the requirements. It is not so with the western separate school. It is as completely within the control of the Department of Education as what are called public schools.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I regret to have occupied so much time in quoting these op-