

the hon. gentleman wants to know, it is very clear that I have used the language which I have in reply to some of his friends and especially to the hon. member for Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Hughes) who, either at London or at Woodstock, said that whatever the French Canadians had in this country had simply been gracefully granted to them by the majority because they are a conquered people. In the province of Quebec even such language is used.

Mr. LALOR. In opening your remarks upon that question you said that you were speaking not to hon. gentlemen on this side of the House but to the government who are making this proposition.

Mr. BOURASSA. If the hon. gentleman will keep quiet I will explain later on the position I take towards both parties, but if he wants me to be clear on this point, I may say that unfortunately his party started the racial cry, and that this party unfortunately is too cowardly to resist it. As far as the rights of the French Canadians in this country are concerned, I again quote the language of the late Sir John Macdonald. I do not suppose that Sir John Macdonald will be denounced even by members on this side of the House as a French demagogue.

I have no accord with the desire expressed in some quarters that by any mode whatever there should be an attempt made to oppress the one language or to render it inferior to the other. I believe that would be impossible if it were tried, and it would be foolish and wicked if it were possible. The statement that has been made so often that this is a conquered country is 'à propos de rien.' Whether it was conquered or ceded, we have a constitution now under which all British subjects are in a position of absolute equality, having equal rights of every kind—of language, of religion, of property and of person. There is no paramount race in this country; there is no conquered race in this country; we are all British subjects, and those who are not English are none the less British subjects on that account.

By the language of Sir John Macdonald, I am ready to abide. These Northwest Territories had, unlike British Columbia, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, no sovereignty when they came into this confederation of ours, but they were purchased by the people of Canada, by all the people of Canada, paid for by the whole people, and I say we have the right to stamp on these Territories the principle laid down by Sir John Macdonald in this House when he said that there is no conquered or inferior race, and that this country was born and it can only live upon the principle of equal rights for all races, equal rights for the French language and equal rights for the Catholic religion.

I ask no privilege for my church or for my language. But I say that while we still have the sovereignty to declare what the constitution of these Northwest provin-

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ces shall be, if we want to be true to ourselves and true to our country, if we want to build up a nation on the principle of conciliation, equal rights and fair-play it is our duty, not because we want to submit to the influence of the church or to conciliate the French vote, but because, whatever may be our creed or origin, we want the Northwest Territories to be built up on the same principle as that which was adopted by the fathers of confederation; that is equal rights to the French language, equal rights to the Catholic religion and equal rights to all parties whatever may be their religion or creed.

There was in the ordinance of 1892, a clause relating to the organization of the districts which remained what it had been in the previous ordinance; that is that the Catholics when they were a local minority in any district were still under the disposition which was denounced by Sir John Thompson in 1890 under which the Catholics could organize a minority separate school only when the majority had organized a public school. As I stated this afternoon, practically speaking this was no detriment to them because the majority were always ready to organize their schools before the minority, but as far as the majority were concerned, even under the ordinance of 1892, they observed the spirit of the law of 1875 and allowed the Catholics where they had a majority, to organize the majority school which was called a Catholic public school. So that, we have to come to the ordinance of 1901, which I will consider in a moment, to find out the disposition which was spoken of by my right hon. friend the Prime Minister this afternoon. An effort is now being made to create the idea that the minority in the Northwest Territories had accepted the ordinance of 1892. But, it must be remembered that the Catholic minority came before the Privy Council of Canada and asked for the disallowance of this ordinance. Upon this point I wish to correct the argument which my hon. friend from Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) made in reply to the Minister of Inland Revenue (Mr. Brodeur). The hon. member for Beauharnois stated that the reason why the ordinance of 1892 was not disallowed was that the dispositions of which the Catholics complained in that ordinance were contained in a previous ordinance. My hon. friend, on that point, was mistaken. He confounded 1892 with 1888. When the law of 1888 containing a special disposition in regard to minority schools was brought before Sir John Thompson, he argued that it would be useless to disallow that ordinance because it would simply put into force the ordinance of 1886. But, the ordinance of 1892 was entirely new legislation. The reasons that were given by Sir John Thompson for not disallowing the ordinance of 1892 were these:

I think the principal reason was perhaps