

the ordinances of 1892 could not be disallowed because it was too late when the petition was presented to the Dominion.

Mr. BERGERON. That was the first reason given, and the second reason that was given in this memorandum of the Privy Council was that they could not do it.

Mr. BRODEUR. I think that in that respect my hon. friend is entirely mistaken. The government simply refused to disallow the ordinances. They never pretended that they had no right to disallow the ordinances, but they simply said in the report that my hon. friend has just read that they did not consider it advisable to disallow the ordinances. They never pretended for a moment that they had not the right to disallow them.

Mr. BERGERON. Evidently the Minister of Inland Revenue does not understand what I have read. I read from the complaint of the minority the first time its representatives appeared before the Canadian Privy Council to complain of the injustice done them. The ordinance of 1892 that they complained of was a re-enactment of a previous ordinance passed in 1891 and they were told that it was too late to disallow the ordinance of 1891.

Mr. BRODEUR. It was not too late to disallow the ordinance of 1892.

Mr. BERGERON. No, but they were told that even if the ordinance of 1892 were disallowed, yet, as the ordinance of 1891 was still in force and it was too late to disallow it, no good would result from the disallowance of the ordinance of 1892.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Why was it not disallowed in 1891?

Mr. BERGERON. Because an appeal in the sense of the provisions of the British North America Act on matters affecting education, was not established as regards the Territories.

Mr. BRODEUR. It was not a question of appeal; it was a question of disallowance.

Mr. BERGERON. The appeal and the disallowance go together and you cannot disassociate them. At all events the result was that the ordinance of 1892 remained in force. But why are my hon. friends opposite playing me with all these questions and all these objections. What is their object in that? I am afraid that it is politics which prompts these interrogations, and I hope that politics will be excluded from this discussion, I trust to be able to treat of this matter aside altogether from petty politics. It is too serious a question with me to allow political considerations to enter into it and I am afraid that these gentlemen opposite have the idea that later on they will be able to say: the Conservatives were in power

Mr. BRODEUR.

and they did not do justice to the minority. Well, Sir, if the Conservatives did wrong they have had their day of reckoning, and if the Conservatives did wrong that is no reason why a Liberal government in power should perpetuate injustice. I have read the reasons which were given for not disallowing the ordinance of 1892, and I would hesitate long before I would come to the belief that Sir John Thompson would sacrifice the Catholic minority of the Northwest Territories. I believe he would have come to their relief unless good and strong reasons prevented him. Sir John Thompson was Minister of Justice at the time, and I take it for granted that he studied the case carefully, and I believe if he had been able to disallow the Act of 1892, or if its disallowance would have been of any avail to the minority, Sir John Thompson would have disallowed it. But the ordinance of 1891 remaining in force, and it being too late to disallow it, no good would be accomplished by disallowing the ordinance of 1892. What is the use of splitting hairs on a question of this kind? I want to take a large view of it; I want to see what has happened; I want to know where we find ourselves to-day and to what cause our grievance may be attributed. There is no doubt that since 1892 there are no separate schools in the Northwest Territories. Whether that be the fault of the Liberals or the fault of the Conservatives does not amount to anything in the present discussion; that will have to be settled before the electorate. Our duty here is to make laws and just laws. Perhaps it is, that because the Conservative government may have been guilty of neglect of duty in this particular, that when the present Bill was introduced into the House of Commons it contained the original clause 16, which was an intimation to me that at least this government was doing its duty—it did not do it long though. Let us refer for a moment to the ordinance of 1891. The rights and privileges of the minority in the Northwest Territories were not taken away abruptly; there was a gradual encroachment until we reached chapter 29 of the ordinance of 1891, the third paragraph of which reads as follows:

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

This was a new feature of the school law of the Northwest Territories. It gave the Territories a Minister of Education or a Commissioner of Education as he is called. It brought education into politics; it abandoned the first council of public instruction that was formed and which was satisfactory; it abandoned the second board of education which was also more or less satisfactory,