

with all possible diffidence—that the union, the real union, in the fullest and proper sense of the term of those districts with the Dominion of Canada, occurred in 1870. The proceedings of 1869-70 merely incorporated those areas with the Dominion. That was not a union in the broad full sense of the word. Why, Sir, at that time these Territories were unpeopled. They had not even institutions of the most primitive sort. In my humble judgment, the real consummation of union will take place on the passage and going into force of these Bills. It would seem to me a matter of grave doubt whether, under the British North America Act of 1867, we had the power to admit these districts into the Dominion, except on a provincial status. The Imperial Act of 1871, called the doubt removing Act, took away, however, any doubt on that point, and these regions in the west were incorporated with the Dominion, not as provinces, but as Territories. In my judgment, I believe that in legislating as we did in 1870, we exhausted the powers given us in that regard by section 146 of the British North America Act of 1867. But those powers were amplified or extended by the Imperial legislation of 1871.

It has been a matter of wonder to me that the Imperial House did not, in its Act of 1871, content itself with simply validating the Manitoba Act; but it did not stop there. It went on to treat of the admission of further Territories west of Manitoba, and gave us power to constitute them into provinces, and in the meantime to make provision for their peace, order and good government. Had it been the intention of the Imperial parliament merely to validate our legislation admitting Manitoba into the union, surely that parliament would have stopped there, but instead it went on to add to our power; and in my judgment we are to-day properly acting under clause section 2 of the Imperial Act of 1871 in constituting these provinces. Acting under the power given by that Act of 1871 this Dominion parliament undertook to provide for the administration of those Territories and for the maintenance of peace, order and good government therein. The most important piece of legislation in that regard was Mr. Mackenzie's Northwest Territorial Act of 1875. In the exercise of our powers, we granted a constitution to these Territories. The educational enactment of that Act of 1875 has been so often referred to that I shall spare the House a repetition of it. Suffice to say that a system of separate schools was instituted, and on that system was based the Territorial school system such as we know it to-day. Take up the debate which took place in 1875 on that measure, and you will find the utterances of the Liberal leaders—and they were Ontario men too—very instructive. Particularly instructive are the words by the Hon. Edward Blake. To an Ontario Lib-

eral—and I claim to be one—the words of Hon. Edward Blake ought to carry weight and authority. They have been quoted two or three times in this debate, but I am sure the House will bear with me whilst I quote them again. Discussing the Bill of 1875, Mr. Blake said:

The task which the ministry had set for itself was the most important it was possible to conceive. To found primary institutions under which we hope to see hundreds of thousands, and the more sanguine of us think, millions of men and families settled and flourishing—

Let me break off here to say that Mr. Blake evidently did not regard this legislation at all as of a temporary, fleeting character, because he was looking forward to the great future when millions of people would be settled in the Territories. He regarded the provisions of that Bill, not as temporary or fleeting in their character, I say, but as permanent and lasting.

He agreed with the hon. member for Kingston (Sir John A. Macdonald) that the task was one which required time, consideration and deliberation.

Further on he said:

He believed that it was essential, to our obtaining a large immigration to the Northwest Territories, that we should tell the people beforehand what those rights were to be in the country in which we invited them to settle.

He regarded it as essential, under the circumstances of the country, and in view of the deliberations during the past few days, that a general principle should be laid down in the Bill with respect to public instruction. He did believe that we ought not to introduce into that territory the heart-burnings and difficulties with which certain other portions of the Dominion and other countries had been afflicted. It seemed to him, having regard to the fact that as far as we could expect at present, the general character of that population would be somewhat analogous to the population of Ontario, that there should be some provision in the constitution by which they should have conferred upon them the same rights and privileges in regard to religious instruction as those possessed by the people of the province of Ontario. The principles of local self-government and the settling of the questions of public instruction, it seemed to him, ought to be the cardinal principles of the measure.

Surely no reasonable man can read Mr. Blake's remarks and not be struck by the fact that, in his opinion the parliament of Canada was engaged in passing legislation, particularly with regard to the school system, which should obtain in the Territories, not for a few years, not simply while they remained as Territories, but so long as the Northwest Territories themselves lasted. That seems to me to be the legitimate deductions from Mr. Blake's remarks. Need I go on and quote what the Hon. David Mills, also an Ontario Liberal—a name which we in Ontario, in Canada in fact, honour and revere—said. Here is the opinion of Mr. Mills:

There was another matter it seemed to him ought not to be disregarded; and that was the