

when they enter the confederation, as they are doing in this year of grace 1905, we feel bound to protect and respect those privileges. I happened lately to be reading the life of the late revered Principal Grant, written by his son. He was the principal of Queen's University, and a man whose name and memory stands hallowed, not only in the Presbyterian Church, of which he was a foremost divine, but by all classes and creeds throughout Canada. Principal Grant was referring to an agitation similar to this, which was gotten up for the purpose of ousting Sir Oliver Mowat from power in Ontario a few years ago, but which, by the way, was singularly unsuccessful.

An hon. MEMBER. As this will be.

Mr. GRANT. As this will be. Said Principal Grant:

There can be no doubt that Sir Oliver Mowat stands now for the fair treatment of minorities, and that is the only way to make possible a united Canadian people. Some Protestants seem to be scared now, and they will be ashamed of themselves by-and-by. We Protestants used to be fearless; we used to say that the truth is great and would prevail; that truth needs only a fair field and no favour; but now some of us seem afraid of the rustling of a leaf. The forms that this thing takes are so extreme that it is impossible for the thing to last any time.

This is an expression of opinion by the late Principal Grant on a similar agitation that took place in Ontario. I leave it with the House, feeling sure it will have great influence upon the hon. gentlemen in the consideration of this aspect of the case.

Now, I would like to point out that the giving of autonomy to these Territories will work no radical or revolutionary change up there. These Territories have gradually been growing up to a provincial status. On the 1st of July next, when, despite the threats of the hon. member for South York (Mr. W. F. Maclean) and one or two others, these Bills will become law, things will be very much the same in those Territories as they were on the 30th of June, the day preceding. The enactment of these Bills will not change the face of nature. It will not make the prairies any more productive; it will not add a dollar's worth to the assets or the natural wealth of the Territories. One would imagine that some revolutionary changes were about to take place; but should the rights of the minority, small though they be, change or rest on any less secure footing because autonomy, full and complete, has been granted to these Territories? For instance, would those rights not indubitably continue if for some reason we postponed giving autonomy to those Territories for the next ten, fifteen or twenty-five years. Would any hon. member of this House deny that statement? The Act of 1875 under which the minority hold their rights have been in force nearly thirty

Mr. GRANT.

years, and in that time there have been many opportunities to repeal that Act. Time and time again the Northwest Territories Act has been before this House for consolidation or consideration, and I think that on two occasions it was proposed by some hon. member of this House to repeal the educational clauses of that Act and hand over the entire charge of education to the territorial authorities. This House has had the opportunity to repeal them on many occasions.

Mr. BELCOURT. It could do it now.

Mr. GRANT. It could do it now, as the hon. member for Ottawa says. My point is this, that if the granting of autonomy were put off for some indefinite period, undoubtedly these educational rights or privileges of the minority would continue. Then, should the fact that we are admitting those Territories to full provincial status militate against the continuance of these rights and privileges? That is to say, the minority may enjoy these rights and privileges according to their conscientious convictions while those Territories remain in a state of tutelage merely as Territories; but when they become autonomous provinces are we then to put that minority in a less secure and less beneficial position by reason of our own act? Supposing autonomy were not granted at the present time, the rights enjoyed by the minority under the Act of 1875 would continue. If those rights were infringed, this parliament would be appealed to, as it was in 1894 when the representatives of the Catholics of the Northwest Territories came down here and asked Sir John Thompson to disallow the Northwest Ordinances.

But it is said: Leave it to the provinces to say what system of education shall be established. In reply to that I say we are leaving this question of education to the provinces, because we are adopting their own approved and valued system. Moreover I would point out that the practical working out, the practical control of all matters of education, will be left with the Northwest legislatures themselves, and in the end it will be the power which has the practical every day working out of the educational system which will be the all controlling element in the matter.

I have already stated that I did not propose entering into a discussion of the constitutional bearings of the case, but some allusion thereto is absolutely necessary to a proper presentation of the facts. Very much difference of opinion has been expressed by legal gentlemen and laymen as to the real meaning and significance of the word 'province' and particularly the words, 'at the union' occurring in subsection 1 of section 93 of the British North America Act, which we all know by heart and which, if we go on discussing much longer, we will be all dreaming about at night. I cannot think—and I give my opinion in great fear and trembling and