

sons why this government and this House must accept this policy of granting allowances to the minority in the Northwest. We are told that even if the law is against them, as a matter of sentiment we must pander to the minority. The hon. gentlemen should remember that that was the question in Manitoba in 1896, when they were quite willing to take advantage of party exigencies and flaunt into power at the sacrifice of the will and the wishes of the minority. The Minister of Finance, in his impassioned appeal to his supporters the other night, begging and pleading with them to vote for the government for fear the Conservatives should come into power, said this: It is quite true, I am against separate schools; it is quite true, we have none of them in the province of Nova Scotia from which I come; but there is in that province a feeling of conciliation and amity, and for that reason we allow certain innovations in the school laws which suit the Roman Catholic part of the population. And yet the Minister of Finance is not willing to allow the majority in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan to extend to the Roman Catholic minority there, that same spirit of conciliation that is extended to the minority in the province of Nova Scotia.

We are told by the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) that there is a risk to be feared in that country, as a reason why the power of educating the people should not be given to the provinces. He pointed out that there was likely to be a large influx of Americans into those provinces. If there is to be, I for one as a Canadian am glad of that fact, I believe American citizens are preferable to the foreigners we are importing into that country; I believe they will make better citizens. And it is not to be expected that men coming from a country where they have not enjoyed separate schools, but where they have a system of national schools, will be the men to accept this whip of coercion which this government propose to lash them with when the time comes.

But we are told in extenuation by the hon. member for Centre York (Mr. A. Campbell) and others: After all, these are separate schools only in name; they will be so handled and regulated as to textbooks, certificates for teachers, and equipment, that they will be practically nullified as to any religious instruction. All I have to say is that I do not accept these schools for that reason. If there is to be a separate school system in the Northwest Territories, I think my Roman Catholic friends are intelligent enough to know how to conduct their own schools; and I do not think they will thank the hon. member for Centre York and other hon. gentlemen who are taking refuge for voting for this Bill in the plea that these schools are going to be controlled by the state, and that for

that reason they will not be church schools as they are commonly known.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Do you deny that they are controlled by the state?

Mr. BENNETT. No, I do not deny that they are controlled by the state.

Mr. CAMPBELL. The hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) did.

Mr. BENNETT. I care not what the hon. member for East Grey says. He is perfectly free to have his own opinion as I am free to have mine, and I am going to take a stand different from that of the hon. member for Centre York. I am not going into a constituency in Ontario to tell the people that I supported these schools because I knew that they were useless schools for the Roman Catholics. I am going to the riding of East Simcoe, which has 1,600 Roman Catholic votes, and I am going to argue, just as I did when I voted against the Remedial Bill in 1896, that I believe that in this country, in every province, it would be better for all parties concerned that there should be no separate schools, but one system of national schools. That is the ground I am going to take, and I will be bound to say that when the time comes for my hon. friend to go back to the constituency of Centre York, the whole burden of his song will be: True, I voted for the Bill, but what does it amount to? The schools are controlled by the state; the law gives no special rights to Roman Catholics, and, to use words which I saw quoted in the public press a short time ago, they will be of so little good for their own purposes that they will soon all die out.

Now, what are we going to do in these two new provinces? we are going in there, with their sparse population as it is to-day, and we are going to fetter these provinces with a system of schools that will be irremovable, that cannot be eradicated, that under the constitution of this country must continue for all time to come. We are to saddle on these provinces, before the population that is to be in there will have anything to say on the question at all in the years that are to come, what we have in the province of Ontario. I am here to say—and I believe I have the confidence and I have the confidence and good will of many Roman Catholics—that the same opinion prevails throughout the province of Ontario that prevails in the town in which I live, where there have been French Roman Catholic priests and Irish Roman Catholic priests, and where there is a large Roman Catholic population. In that town they want no separate school at all. What do the returns show as to the separate schools in the province of Ontario to-day? Let any hon. gentleman consult the returns, and he will find that town after town of 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 population in