

At the request, both of the imperial government and the Canadian government, Archbishop Taché, who was then in Rome, came back to Canada for the purpose of inducing his people to come willingly under the control of the Canadian confederation. In a book which he published some years ago on this school question, Archbishop Taché quotes a personal letter from Sir John Young, in which Sir John Young said, in substance, that his people may be assured their rights and privileges will be maintained. That is not all. We find that after Archbishop Taché went to the Northwest, a delegation was sent from the settlers of that country to Ottawa to confer with the Canadian government and the Governor General, Sir John Young. Those settlers presented a Bill of Rights covering the demands which they intended to make upon the Dominion government. Among other things, they asked the Canadian government that the privileges which they had hitherto enjoyed should be continued. More than that. Let me call special attention to this fact, because it shows what was the agreement and contract then entered into. The imperial and Canadian governments had both been asking the settlers to formulate their demands, to mention what they wanted in connection with the establishment of Canadian authority in their country. The representatives of these settlers came to Ottawa, and among the demands they made is the following, which we find in article 7 of their Bill of Rights:

That the public money for schools be distributed among the different religious institutions in proportion to the number of people belonging to the same creed, according to the system established in the province of Quebec.

So we see that the representatives of the settlers came to the government here and asked that a system of separate schools should be established in the Northwest similar to that in the province of Quebec. And I may add that the governor, Sir John Young, afterwards telegraphed to Lord Granville the Secretary of State for the Colonies: 'Negotiations with delegates close satisfactorily.' And Lord Granville answered expressing satisfaction. Archbishop Taché, one of those engaged in these negotiations states that it was understood that the rights and privileges of the minority should be respected and that there should be separate schools in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. SPROULE. What Bill of Rights is the hon. gentleman (Mr. Brodeur) quoting?

Mr. BRODEUR. I am quoting from Bill No. 24.

Mr. SPROULE. Of the fourth Bill of Rights? The authenticity of that Bill of Rights is disputed.

Mr. BRODEUR. I do not know whether it has been disputed or not. But I know that the man who brought down this Bill of Rights to Ottawa swore in court, in the case of Lepine, that this Bill of Rights was genuine. And if my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) goes to the library he will find that this Bill of Rights is included in the papers brought down to parliament at that time. More than that, Lord Strathcona, a man whose word we cannot dispute, a man honourable in every respect, and one connected with these negotiations,—having been sent by this government to induce the settlers of the Northwest to accept the situation—says, as will be found in the House of Commons 'Debates,' 1896, page 4137:

It is true that not much was said about schools at that time, but it was distinctly understood by the people there, and the promise was made to these people that they would have every privilege in joining Canada, which they possessed at that time.

Is there anything plainer, anything surer, than that there was a compact at that time, by which separate schools should be maintained in the Northwest?

Mr. SPROULE. I do not wish to interrupt the hon. gentleman (Mr. Brodeur), but, with his permission, I would like to ask him a question. If I understand him correctly, he says that these settlers were to continue to enjoy every privilege they then had. What privilege which they enjoyed then has been denied them since?

Mr. BRODEUR. I do not say that these privileges have been absolutely denied. At the same time, in certain parts of the Northwest, they have been denied. Perhaps in the Northwest they have not gone so far as to destroy entirely the separate schools, but they have certainly to a large extent decreased the privileges which the minority enjoy with regard to separate schools.

Mr. SPROULE. They did not have any privileges of separate schools, therefore that privilege has not been taken from them.

Mr. BRODEUR. My hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) is entirely mistaken, they had privileges with regard to separate schools. Is it not perfectly clear that they had voluntary schools in the Northwest at that time?

Mr. SPROULE. Yes.

Mr. BRODEUR. Were not these schools, where Catholics, controlled by the Catholics, and where Protestants controlled by the Protestants? And let me put this question to my friend: Is it not true that the authority then exercising rights of sovereignty in the Northwest Territories, the Hudson Bay Company, was giving a share of money to these schools whether Catholic or Protestant?

Mr. SPROULE. May I remind the hon. gentleman (Mr. Brodeur) that what the peo-