

ing the whole of this discussion. The growth of Canada, while not always in the past satisfactory, has of recent years been quite up to our expectations and fully warrants all the optimism that has been shown, and we have not only grown in resources and population, but I think we have grown in intelligence, in richness, and in all other marks of progress. And yet, as I consider the treatment of some public questions, it has been a question in my mind whether with all that progress we have quite held our own—I shall not say progressed—but quite held our own in matters requiring deliberation and self-restraint. Possibly it may be a passing phase in our career, but I regret that at the moment there is some evidence of at least a standing still in that respect. In a country like ours, that is new and young, that has immense territories, that has a sparse population spread over a great area, it is exceedingly necessary that care should be used in all the legislation we bring forward. The cohesion between the different portions of the country is not yet strong; the national feeling has not grown possibly, to the extent it should; we have been so busy in many other respects. Our country is divided in various ways; we have in the east a fine set of provinces speaking one language. They are partially divided from the next province by a territory which possibly is not fertile or fit for agriculture, and then we come to a province in which another language is spoken. Then we pass on to Ontario and there again we have the English language. Between Ontario and Manitoba there is a portion of territory almost unsettled and so we find breaks as we continue through our country and necessarily that leads to a lack of cohesion between the various parts of it, and it is necessary in all our legislation that we should be particularly careful to avoid anything that would break or strain or separate. This is particularly applicable to questions of the kind that is at present under discussion. The educational features of this Bill are the ones that have aroused the greatest friction, but there are many other important questions involved in it and some of them may have untoward results if they are not carefully handled. In all new proposals that come before one it is natural that some special features in them should first take pre-eminence, that you would first find your mind coming to a decision on certain points, and this has been most strikingly so in the consideration of this question. It sometimes happens that you find that the point on which you first come to a decision is not the point that you should have first decided; the sequence is not always of importance. It was natural when this Bill was brought in for the formation of two new provinces out of those Territories that our minds should revert to the history of our country, to the time at which those lands became either in the union of

Canada or in the possession of Canada, which ever term one may use, to the years 1870 when, by a certain class of purchase from the Hudson Bay Company we obtained possession of them, not, I think, as I have heard it stated, by a purchase of these lands from the Hudson Bay Company, but by the purchase of their rights, whatever they were, and by the grant of that country from the Crown to Canada. That country contained a very small population and by the Act of 1871 we were entrusted with the government of it. In the Act, I think, we will agree, that while they were territories we were entrusted with the power to govern them as we saw fit. They were governed under that Act by a lieutenant governor and council. Later on, when the population had grown larger and when the needs of the country were greater, they were given a certain amount of legislative control of their own affairs, and in the Mackenzie Act of 1875, that was carried to a considerable extent, and they had, even before they became a province, representatives and have representatives in this parliament. Under the Act of 1875, a legislature with certain powers was created there and while full powers were not given, comparatively large powers were given although certain limitations were placed upon the powers granted. Under that legislative power these Territories enacted certain ordinances and among them were those relating to education, and it so happened that in the Mackenzie Act there was a specific reference made to the privileges of minorities in regard to denominational schools and it was under that that these schools were first established. Later on this legislature, acting, perhaps, not under the law of 1875, but it seems to me rather acting beyond that law, or taking power not granted to them by the law of 1875, passed ordinances which appeared to restrict the privileges given in regard to denominational schools in that territory. Later on it made other changes and we find by the record that the Roman Catholic minority in the Territories made an appeal to the government here at Ottawa, of which Sir John Thompson was then a member, for redress or for the veto of those ordinances. This was not granted, but these ordinances remained in force and certain regulations also passed by their educational council. That state of affairs has continued down to the present time. We are told that on the whole these ordinances have been fairly acceptable. We realize, however, that the law of 1875 has not been fully carried out by the ordinances and the regulations now in force. We realize also that we cannot say positively that the schools or the educational regulations are entirely acceptable to the Roman Catholic minority in these Territories. But such of the privileges as under the law of 1875 and these ordinances and regulations have re-