

we should tell the people before hand what those rights were to be in the country to which we invited them to settle. . . .

He did not agree with the policy of asking people to settle in that western country, and tell them that a paternal government would look after them and would give them such institutions as the government thought suitable. We had better let the people know their fate politically and otherwise before they settled there. . . .

He regarded it as essential under the circumstances of the country, and in view of the deliberations during the last few days—

Making reference to the New Brunswick school question—

—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 this 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 question of public instruction seemed to him ought to be the cardinal principles of the measure.

I need not say that Mr. Blake did not give the slightest intimation that the cardinal principle of that legislation with regard to public instruction meant only that parliament was dealing with it for the time being and that as soon as the Territories were organized into provinces, they would be at liberty to change their system. Mr. Mackenzie, who immediately assented to the proposition of Mr. Blake, said:

As to the subject of public instruction, it did not in the first place attract his attention, but when he came to the subject of local taxation he was reminded of it. Not having had time before to insert a clause on the subject, he proposed to do so when the Bill was in committee. The clause provided that the Lieutenant Governor, by and with the consent of his council or assembly, as the case might be, should pass all necessary ordinances in respect of education, but it would be specially provided that the majority of the ratepayers. . . .

I would like to draw the attention of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition to that:

—might establish such schools and impose such necessary assessments as they might think fit; and that the minority of the ratepayers, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, might establish separate schools, and such ratepayers would be liable only to such educational assessments as they might impose upon themselves. This, he hoped, would meet the objection offered by the hon. member for South Bruce.

It will thus be seen that parliament was dealing not with this minority and that majority in any particular section of the

Territories, but with the Protestant or Catholic majority and the Protestant or Catholic minority, as the case might be, throughout the Territories. When the question was brought before the Senate, and Mr. Brown opposed the measure, the Hon. Mr. Scott who has charge of the Bill for the government, spoke as follows:

He was one of those who maintained that parents had a right to educate their children as they pleased and that they ought not to be taxed to maintain schools to which they could not conscientiously send their children. Our whole system of government was based upon that sound principle, and how long could we have happiness and peace in the country if we were to abolish that safeguard which was now recognized in both the large provinces? Would not every gentleman in this chamber gladly see the New Brunswick trouble removed? Now was the proper time to establish in the new territory a principle that ought years ago to have been established in this Dominion.

And the Hon. Mr. Miller, a Conservative, who was afterwards President of the Senate, said:

All the Bill asked was that all parties in that new country should have such schools as they chose to establish at their own expense, and that minorities would at all times be safe against the tyranny or intolerance of majorities. That would not be interfering with the just rights of any body or class but, on the contrary, it would be guaranteeing the rights of all classes. It would simply be providing, while they had the power to do so, for freedom of conscience with regard to the vexed question of education.

But I would call especially the attention of members of the Conservative party to the construction put upon that law by the Hon. Alex. Campbell. He said:

It would be much to be regretted if the amendment passed. The object of the Bill was to establish and perpetuate in the Northwest Territories the same system as prevailed in Ontario and Quebec, and which had worked so well in the interest of peace and harmony with the different populations of those provinces. He thought the fairer course, and the better one, for all races and creeds, was to adopt the suggestion of the government and enable people to establish separate schools in that territory, and thus prevent the introduction of evils from which Ontario and Quebec had suffered, but had judicially rid themselves.

In the year following, 1876, petitions were sent to this parliament, just as they have been this year, asking for the repeal of that law; but at that time the wave of anti-Catholicism was not from Ontario but from the maritime province; and unfortunately, apart from the province of Quebec, all the provinces of Canada have from time to time been subjected to such kind of agitation—the setting of one race or creed against another. Those petitions were presented by the Hon. Mr. Macfarlane, and the minister who spoke for the government on that occasion was the Hon. Mr. Letellier. Mr. Letellier declared positively that the question