

a member of the majority. The question must be put to the representatives of the minority in this House. I presume that the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) is to-night representing the hon. member for Carleton (Mr. R. L. Borden), and I would ask, when the leader of the opposition put the question to the representatives of the minority who sit with him in this parliament how many of them expressed their willingness to have the guarantee left out and to leave the matter to the justice of the majority. It is not for me as a member of the majority to answer this question, it is not to the majority, it is to the members of the minority that that question is put. If they say they are willing I would say that possibly we might consent to leave out the guarantee, although as a matter of fact I prefer to have the guarantee left in this shape so that there will be no uncertainty in these provinces. Can we blame the members of the minority after all when we look at the history of Manitoba and the Territories? We have cut the minority privilege down there from what it was originally interpreted to mean. It was originally interpreted by the legislature of the Territories, the old Northwest council, to mean that there should be church control for Roman Catholic schools. We have cut that down. We all know what occurred in Manitoba and what occurred in regard to the French language. As soon as the Northwest legislature obtained the power to deal with it, it abolished the dual system, and I say as a representative of the Northwest Territories that it did the only reasonable thing. It would have been absurd in that country to have continued the official publication of all laws and court records in French, because not one out of 500 of those who could read laws at all could not read them in English. I say looking at the history of Manitoba and the Northwest, that if I was a member of the minority I would not consent to have the guarantee cut out, because I would fear that the time would come, and that not in the very far future, when the final vestige of the separate school would disappear.

Mr. BERGERON. Will my hon. friend allow me to put a question to him? Will he tell us what he understands by separate schools?

Mr. SCOTT. I understand that the minority, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, in any school district have a right to set up a school of their own; and that school comes under the same government as the public school, its teachers have to be certificated in the same way, with the same qualifications and the same normal school training, it has the same text books and has to produce the same results to earn the same money grants.

Mr. BERGERON. What is the difference between the two schools then?

Mr. SCOTT. Not any difference, only the one I have mentioned.

Mr. BERGERON. Where is the separate school then?

Mr. SCOTT. It is certainly a separate school, though it is not a religious school.

Mr. BERGERON. It may be in a different building, but it is the same school.

Mr. SCOTT. It is the same class of school. When our friends of the minority decline, as, in my judgment, they have good reason to decline, looking at the history of the school question in the Northwest, to have the guarantee cut out of the Bill, then it is reasonable for me as a member of the majority, in view of the fact that it is not going to violate any principle of sound public policy, to leave the guarantee in. Indeed, as I have explained, I prefer to have the guarantee left in in this shape, and, so far as the educational provisions are concerned, I vote for these Bills without any hesitation. This is exactly the proposition I want, for the following reasons:—

1. It removes all uncertainty.
2. It respects the minority conscience without violating any sound public principle.
3. It provides securely against agitation in future.
4. It perpetuates a system which has in practice proved to be eminently satisfactory to all classes.
5. It means coercion in no sense or adaptation of the word, because it merely guarantees what would be continued by the almost universal will of the provinces.
6. It continues a system preferable in its practical working out to the public school system of Manitoba, where the minority have a theoretical grievance, which interested parties are constantly able to exaggerate, and who continue to chafe under what they believe to be an infringement on their rights.
7. It furnishes a possible common ground of action by the members of this House, and thus maintains unity. No common action was possible either upon the original section 16 or upon the amendment of the leader of the opposition.
8. More than all, it is satisfactory to me as a citizen of, and one of the majority in, the Northwest, because it not only reasonably secures minority rights, but it absolutely secures majority rights against such invasion as was attempted by parliament in 1896 in the case of Manitoba. It is the only absolute guarantee of educational autonomy contained in any suggestion made to this House, excepting only that of the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton), to specifically make the provinces free and get imperial ratification of the free charters. Mr. Haultain's draft Bill left the door specifically