

appeal, we exert a certain control over provincial legislation. Why should we not settle at once, a point which otherwise would be apt to give rise to litigation. By doing that, one undoubted advantage is secured: the saving to parties interested of some heavy expenditure, and the saving to the country at large of an agitation uncertain as to the proportions it may assume and the time it may last. Judging from past experience, we may assume, of course, that if the present government were in power, at the time the trouble broke out, six months might be sufficient to restore harmony; but should we happen to be then under the rule of our friends on the other side, the discontent would last for six years.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, if the legislatures of the new provinces propose granting or maintaining separate schools in the North-west Territories, they should not, it seems to me, have very strong objections to our doing it for them, and if such is not their intention, it is only wise and just—as previously shown in full—that we should see to it ourselves and once for all. Sincerity is a grand virtue, greatly prized in private life, and which is proportionately of still greater value in public matters.

Would those who stick to this contention be willing to permit that all the provinces, Quebec included, should legislate unreservedly and exclusively, at their own free will, on matters of education? If so, they are giving credit to my province for a spirit of justice and fairness and for breadth of mind, which testimony fills me with pride; if not, we have a right to say that they are not sincere, and they have not the right to complain that we are giving offence in so saying.

Now, another objection has been raised; it has been contended that such legislation should be referred to the courts. I claim that such a contention is not new. Judges are appointed by parliament, or, at any rate by the government as representing the majority of the members, and while the courts are entrusted with the duty of applying the law, it devolves on parliament to enact it. I see no reason why, under these circumstances, the creative power should be superseded by the power it has created. We have here the hon. Minister of Justice who is the official head of the bench in all of the provinces. We have here a number of lawyers, of legal gentlemen, some of whom will become judges without being possessed of a greater knowledge of the law than what they possess to-day, so that parliament should be in a position to fulfil the part which public confidence has assigned exclusively to it. Rather than seeking refuge behind such pretences in order to avoid the responsibility of the views I might express, I would much prefer condemning outright the policy contained in the Bill in the hope that I might be still worthy of the confidence with which peo-

ple have heretofore honoured me on account of my frankness. As for those who favour the establishment of a single system of education, and who, because they find it satisfactory, want to see it accepted as such by all, they forget that everything in society, in the universe, is relative; that such a system which answers perfectly well the needs of so and so, may not be at all what suits the requirements of somebody else. Those who start on such a narrow basis, who have only one term of comparison and who, utterly uncompromising, want the state to distribute justice and protection to its citizens solely in accordance with their own narrow views, while at the same time they claim equal rights for all, they recall to my mind the levelling theory of a certain monarch in olden times. Having put it into his head to establish absolute equality in his domain, he took his own stature as a standard which all his subjects should conform to; he ordered his officers and soldiers to take hold in the cities and throughout the country of all tall men and to cut them down to the required height, while on the other hand smaller men were to be stretched out until they reached the full royal stature. While there may be men in this House who understand equality in that fashion, fortunately there are others whose ideas are sounder.

Those who, like ourselves, are in favour of the proposed legislation are quite willing to let all and every one with the beliefs and feelings he owes to birth, family or national traditions, in the same way as they are willing to allow to every man the stature which he holds from nature. These broad-minded, fair and generous men are not of the opinion that liberty consists in thinking freely, provided you think exactly in the way of the man who holds an opinion contrary to yours.

Judging from the way in which the various statements in respect to the proposed legislation have been received in this House I am perfectly satisfied that the men who have a sound conception of equality, justice and liberty constitute, and on the day the vote is taken will constitute an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons in Canada.

Many things have been said, in fact I think everything has been said for or against this legislation. Many quotations have been made, and in this respect, I am indebted to those hon. members who have spoken before me, as they have saved me considerable labour.

Although, I have, as a rule, been present during the debate ever since its inception, it may be that some things have escaped my notice. Neither have I been able to take cognizance of all the speeches reported in 'Hansard,' whose bulkiness I am contributing to increase just now. I am not sure, however, that the name of the discoverer of these Territories, or of the man who first explored them, has been recalled in this