

but I am prepared to say that by far the greater portion of the capital in these companies is owned by Protestants.

Mr. SPROULE. Yet the Protestants only get one-fourth, while the Catholics receive three-fourths.

Mr. AMES. I do not propose to discuss that question. It is a two-sided one and there is much to be said on both sides. That is not the reason why I give these figures. I give them to show that the only grievance one ever hears of in the city of Montreal, namely, the application of the funds raised under the school law from joint stock companies, is entirely obviated by the legislation existing in the Northwest Territories. Chapter 30 of the School Ordinances of the Northwest Territories, section 93 provides:

The share or portion of the property of any company entered, rated or assessed in any municipality or in any school district for separate school purposes under the provisions of this section shall bear the same ratio and proportion to the whole property of the company assessable within the municipality or school district as the amount or proportion of the shares or stock of the company so far as the same are paid or partly paid up, held and possessed by persons who are Protestants or Roman Catholics as the case may be, bears to the whole amount of such paid or partly paid up shares or stock of the company.

We find therefore that whatever money is contributed by any joint stock company is expended on schools, according to the religious belief of the person who owns the share of stock. Every share is supposed to carry with it the religion of its owner, and the division made accordingly, so that this one possible grievance which we have in the province of Quebec does not exist in the Territories and cannot arise under the ordinances I have read.

But to come back to the heart of the question. This House will shortly be called on to vote, and the options before it are these. We may either vote for the amended clause 16, which is intended to restrict the power of the new provinces to this extent, that they cannot take away any of the privileges which the minority in the Northwest at present enjoy; or we may vote for the resolution which the leader of the opposition has presented and which he has told us is his own view. Reading carefully the amendment of my hon. friend, the leader of the opposition, I find it may be understood as the opinion of an eminent legal authority on the validity of the legislation which we are about to enact, or as an expression of opinion regarding the principle which should be applied by this House to the successive clauses that make up this Bill. As a legal opinion, I am prepared to accept the amendment of my hon. leader as

authoritative. I consider him to be a constitutional authority of the highest possible standing; and when he makes the declaration that in his opinion this legislation is ultra vires, I believe him to be right and that the government are incurring great risk in going on with this legislation. But his amendment also affirms a principle. It says that as we are called upon to deal with the several clauses of the Bill, we shall judge them by one standard of measurement alone. We are to test each successive clause so as to ascertain whether it gives full provincial rights; and any clause which accords anything less than complete control over provincial matters shall be voted down. That is the standard which is proposed. For my part I cannot admit this as the one and only principle which should be applied to the Bill. I am prepared to accept it as regards every other clause in the measure, but into the consideration of the matter of education I believe a higher principle enters. I believe we would be breaking faith with the minority, whom it is the duty of parliament to protect, if we should decide to take away the guarantee they now have for the perpetuation of the special privileges they now enjoy.

I represent a constituency which in some respects is, I think, typical of the Dominion of Canada as a whole. I represent a constituency in which all races, creeds and nationalities dwell together in perfect harmony. It was intimidated by the Minister of Agriculture, I think, this afternoon that some of the members on this side were about to vote for the Bill through a feeling of fear, that they were likely to be compelled to support it through dread of a certain portion of their electors. For my part I wish to repudiate the assertion absolutely. I am not voting through fear. I am voting through a sense of justice. I have not during this entire debate, although I have nearly 2,500 French Canadian electors and probably 2,000 English-speaking Roman Catholic electors in my division, received a single letter, a single petition, or a single request to vote with the government in respect to this Bill. Therefore, I am not in any way voting under compulsion nor through fear of offending any portion of my electors. If I vote, as I will with the government on amended clause 16 of the Bill, I will do it because I conscientiously believe that they are right on that issue. I said a moment ago that I represent a mixed electorate, and Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to say that I consider this to be no disadvantage but the very reverse. It has been my good fortune for many years to enjoy the confidence of men of different races, nationalities and religions, and to learn that on nearly every great question there may be differing points of view and to learn also that it is quite possible for good men to disagree on questions that seem vital to both. We have been taught in the city of Montreal that there