

ernment of Mr. Mackenzie without reaching the conclusion that what they meant to do was to establish the system of separate schools, not for the moment, not for a short period, but as a part of the government of that country for all future time. Mr. Scott is a lawyer; but I do not present his views as part of a legal argument. I am not presenting a legal argument; I quote these words simply to show that Mr. Scott, representing the government of the day, judged by the language he used, must have contemplated that the clause which they then adopted was intended, even though we might have the power to repeal it, to continue in force for ever in the Northwest Territories. Then I find also that the distinguished leader of the Conservative opposition in the Senate at that time, Sir Alexander Campbell, also discussed the question. Sir Alexander Campbell was a lawyer, and for a time was Minister of Justice. He refers to an amendment which had been removed by Mr. Aikins, to strike out the separate school clause, and this is what 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 these 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 the people to establish separate schools in the territory, and thus prevent the introduction of evils from which Ontario and Quebec had suffered, but had judiciously rid themselves.

Is it possible to attach to that language any other meaning than that Sir Alexander Campbell desired to settle this troublesome question by adopting the separate school clause then and for all future time? Is it conceivable that he meant: We will settle this question up to a certain day and then we will throw the door open to discord and strife? His language cannot be subject to such interpretation. What could be stronger than these words: 'To establish and perpetuate in the Northwest Territories the same system as prevailed in Ontario and Quebec?' Not only to establish but to 'perpetuate.' Did that mean a temporary arrangement? Surely, if the English language means anything, Sir Alexander Campbell meant when he spoke that day that the Bill he was supporting, though leader of the opposition, was meant to establish and perpetuate in some way a system of separate schools in the Northwest Territories. Then the Hon. George Brown spoke. Reference has already been made to his part in this debate; but the words he used may be quoted again. In the course of the discussion he supported the amendment that was moved by Mr. Aikins to strike out the separate school clause and he used these words:

The moment this Act passed and the Northwest became part of the union, they came under the Union Act and under the provisions with regard to separate schools.

Mr. Brown was not a lawyer. I am not quoting his words as expressing an opinion which is worthy of any consideration as part of a constitutional argument: I am speaking entirely with a view to establishing the intention that existed in the minds of the men who passed the legislation—the government who proposed it and the men in the opposition who supported it. There is one sentence in the speech of Hon. Edward Blake in this House that I would like to repeat:

He (Mr. Blake) believed that it was essential to our obtaining a large immigration to the Northwest Territories that we should tell the people beforehand what these rights were to be in the country to which they were invited.

I have no doubt, from information that has reached me, that many immigrants have come into the Northwest Territories upon representations that the schools there would be conducted in accordance with their religious views. I believe this to be correct. I may mention a little incident bearing on that point. I had occasion recently to come into official contact with the representative of one of the continental nations. I was discussing with him the question of immigration—we wished to have immigrants come to Canada from his country. In the course of our conversation he said: If you are to get immigrants from our country, this school question that is coming up becomes one of very great importance to us. I have no doubt therefore that it can be shown that some of the immigrants who have come to the Northwest Territories have come—for we have many Roman Catholic settlers in that country—on the faith of representations that their schools were to be conducted in accordance with the views of the Roman Catholic minority.

I find that not only is there the evidence I have referred to, showing the intention at the time this Act was passed, but later on there were further discussions which may be cited in the same direction. I find that some years afterwards, in 1894, there was a discussion in this House with regard to some amendments of the Northwest Act that were proposed. I find that the late Mr. Dalton McCarthy, who desired that the separate school clause should be repealed, who was an opponent of separate schools as hon. gentlemen well remember, in a speech at that time laid down the principle that if you should continue to allow that separate school clause to remain on the statute-book, if you should go on year after year allowing the Northwest people to possess this system of separate schools up to the moment at which they would be brought in as a province, then they would be in a position to come to us and say: It is too late for you to change that