

what right we have to suppose that the people of the Northwest will not grant the same privileges as we would grant in the east. While I am not saying that they would not, I will say that if I were a Catholic living in the Northwest what has happened in the past would, I think, be notice to me that I had not a great deal to expect in matters of this kind. I do not want to jar upon the feelings of any western man, or any other man, but I think that to be honest we should place the facts just as we find them. In the seventies, or perhaps in the eighties, a school law was passed in Manitoba which, as far as I can learn, was perfectly satisfactory to the Catholics and was a carrying out of the compact of 1870. Why it was so, I do not know; but the fact is that it was later wiped off the statute-books, and there is no such thing in the statute-book of Manitoba to-day. It has been stated in this House to-day that a resolution has been twice passed in the legislature of the Northwest asking the government to take away the provisions of the Northwest Territories Act in respect to separate schools. These provisions have not been taken away, but does anybody venture to tell me that if the legislature of the Northwest had the power to take these provisions away, it would not do so? They have twice passed resolutions wiping off the slate. They had not the power to fully and effectively carry that out, but as far as the intention is concerned, it was clearly there. All doubt with respect to the legislature of the Territories is removed in that way, and doubt with respect to the legislature of Manitoba is removed by the fact that three times in succession efforts have been made to wipe off the statute-book anything which authorized separate schools; and I, therefore, think the minority are justified in asking us, when granting a new constitution, to see that these rights which were reserved to them in 1875 will again be reserved to them under the constitution of 1905.

I have spoken longer than I intended, but the points I wish to make are these, and I shall summarize them in concluding. In the first place, I wish to point out that I think that we have ample power under the provisions of the British North America Act, 1867, and the Orders in Council which were passed to give us control over the Northwest and over British Columbia in 1871, to grant a constitution to any new provinces that we might carve out of the new country. I think, Sir, that we are perfectly safe in taking it for granted that when the parliament of Great Britain told us that we could give a province a constitution, that that means a constitution and it means nothing less. To give a province a constitution is to give it all the machinery necessary to carry its affairs on as a province; and when, in the old days, we took in provinces by Order in Council, we took them in on such conditions as were stipulated

and agreed upon, and perhaps one hundred changes would be made between the commencement of negotiations and the final admission of the province. If we were bound down to hard and fast rules, we could never get a province to enter the confederation, and the early legislators of Canada were not long in discovering that some discretionary power was needed, and Sir John A. Macdonald asked the parliament of England to give the Dominion parliament such power as would enable them to give the provinces entering confederation such constitution as from time to time they might find necessary. These constitutional powers were granted and exercised, and in the exercise of that discretion the parliament of Canada had full power to mould and shape the conditions of Canada and to give to these new provinces a constitution as much as possible on the lines of the old provinces, making such changes as were necessary to suit the circumstances in each case.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that we have this power, and that we are exercising it in the right direction in recognizing the circumstances that to-day exist in that country. While we should give every privilege to the local legislature, we should carry out, in dealing with these new provinces, the principles that governed us in forming constitutions of the other provinces. It was recognized, as I said before, at confederation; it was recognized in 1870, when the people who had formed confederation had every term and every condition of that contract fresh in their minds, when they had just returned from the conferences in England, when they were fresh from the conferences at Quebec and elsewhere, and when they had the whole business moulded and shaped in their minds, then the very first time they had to put it into effect they recognized the principle for which I am contending, and which is found in the British North America Act of a few years before. As I said before, it is recognized in the Act of 1875, it is recognized in that admirable speech of Mr. Blake, in that speech of Alexander Mackenzie, and in the concurrence with that idea of Sir John Macdonald and every member who spoke in the House of Commons in 1875. Finding these conditions and finding that it is our duty to follow them out, and finding that we have those powers, are we doing anything but what is right and fair when, in this slight way, we recognize that constitutional principle? What are we doing? We are simply adopting and making the law of the Dominion a law which the premier of the country with which we are dealing has stated is first-class legislation, is legislation which was passed by the parliament over which he presides, and of which he has said that if he were a dictator to-morrow he would not change one line of it. We are putting an Act into force in this country which an hon. gentleman who sits in this House as an opponent of the gov-