

Conservative party had not expressed a legal opinion upon this question. Well, I listened to the argument of the hon. leader of the opposition, and I believe he expressed a legal opinion second to none in this Dominion, and one which has not been disputed by any equal or higher authority in this country.

Mr. ALEX. JOHNSTON. What is it?

Mr. J. D. REID. I thought that was the hon. member for Cape Breton, because he usually asks a question merely to show his ignorance, through not having heard or read the remarks.

Mr. ALEX. JOHNSTON. Mr. Speaker, if my hon. friend will permit me for a moment, I can assure him that I am just as anxious as he or any other member of this House is to ascertain exactly where the hon. leader of the opposition stands on this question. He has not informed us himself, and I am quite sure that the hon. member for Grenville, before he sits down, will tell us. I expect him to do so.

Mr. J. D. REID. If the hon. member for Cape Breton will kindly read the speech of the hon. leader of the opposition, I am satisfied that he has equal intelligence to the rest of the members of this House, and he will unarguably understand his opinion on the question.

Mr. ALEX. JOHNSTON. I have read it.

Mr. J. D. REID. The hon. member for Lunenburg referred to the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), and did it in such a way as to cast slights on the Orangemen of this Dominion. I am not an Orangeman, but I think it ill-becomes any hon. gentleman of this House to cast a slur upon or to speak lightly of that body. They are an honourable body, a body who I believe wish to do what is right, fair and just to every party and every religion in this country. The hon. gentleman referred to the Jacques Cartier Club in Montreal speaking in one way and to the Orangemen in the province of Ontario speaking in the other way, saying that this was done for the purpose of stirring up political strife. What about the Liberal members of this House in the province of Quebec and the Liberal members in the province of Ontario? You see members in the province of Ontario going to their different constituents and making speeches entirely opposite to those made by other members in the province of Quebec; they are doing that for the purpose of creating strife or trouble. I believe that every hon. member in this House will agree with me when I say that the hon. leader of the opposition made his speech with the greatest care not to cause any religious strife throughout this Dominion. I believe he wished to do what was fair, and the fact that in winding up his speech he left every

Mr. J. D. REID.

member of the opposition free to act on this measure as he conscientiously believed to be right, showed that he was acting fairly. I thought the leader of the government should also have left the members on his side free to do what they thought right in the matter. If he had done so, I believe that there would not have been any strife in this country on this question.

So far as I am personally concerned, I agree that the time has arrived when autonomy should be granted to the Northwest Territories. I believe that the population of the Northwest Territories has reached such numbers that they are entitled to provincial autonomy. I also believe it, for the reason that they have practically had provincial autonomy for a great many years. I also believe that there should be two provincial parliaments, as the country seems to me to be too large for only one parliament. Therefore, in so far as that is concerned, I am fully in accord with the granting of provincial autonomy to the Northwest Territories. But in doing so, I consider that we should be entirely governed by the British North America Act and do nothing inconsistent with it. The other provinces were formed in accordance with that Act, and I have yet to hear where there has been any trouble in any of them, namely, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec or Ontario, or even I might add Manitoba, in so far as the British North America Act is concerned. Even in the province of Manitoba, where there was supposed to be a great deal of trouble, they have been getting along nicely and quietly, and the majority there have been treating the minority fair and right, at least as far as I can judge from reading the newspapers, according to the newspapers there has been very little trouble in that province since the advent of the Conservative party into power in its legislature. In my opinion, the amendment moved by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition is in accordance with the British North America Act and is consequently fair and just. I believe further that if this government persists in attaching the educational clauses to these Bills, that will have the effect of retarding immigration. I believe that people intending to come and settle in this country, when they see this agitation raised and this quarrel going on probably in the provincial government of the new provinces, many of them, both Catholic and Protestant, who may feel strongly on this question, will not emigrate to this country. Therefore, I think that if the schools were left entirely in the hands of the provincial government, there will not be any strife or trouble, but these governments will meet the wants of the people as these wants manifest themselves from time to time. In my opinion, these educational clauses are tacked on to these Bills on account of a pledge made by the First Minister in the year 1896. In that year when all