

Mr. FIELDING. I take it he referred to the general legislation as to separate schools in the Northwest. That is what I take it to mean. Again I quote from Sir John Thompson in the same debate. I will quote a clause which my hon. friend read to-day, but I want to quote it in an enlarged form :

We claim therefore that the constitutional system which was established with regard to schools and with regard to language in 1875 ought to be maintained for the same reasons as those which dictated its creation, and that this condition of affairs should last, at least, while the affairs of the Territories are under the control of this parliament.

That language seems to imply that the matter might be further considered when they ceased to be territories. Then he goes on to say what I read just previously :

What the constitution of the future provinces shall be, in view of the pledges which have been referred to, or in view of any other set of circumstances, will be for parliament to decide when it decides to create those provinces. I hope therefore that the House will be careful to-day not to disturb the arrangement so wisely made in 1875, and which is as useful to the Territories now, as it was then.

Now can anybody point out wherein there will be a difference in the educational needs of the Northwest on the 1st day July, 1905, as compared with the conditions on the 30th June in the same year? You will have passed from the status of a territory to the status of a province, but will that in the slightest degree alter the needs or conditions of the Northwest with respect to education? If the schools which they have are working happily and satisfactorily on the 30th day of June in this year 1905, what reason will there be for making any change in the legislation on the 1st day of July following? Aside from the constitutional question, surely we have to admit there is the practical question of the needs of the people of the Northwest Territories, and in that respect they will not be different on the morning of the 1st day of July from their needs on the morning or the 30th day of June. A clause of that kind, Sir John Thompson said, is as useful to the Territories to-day as it was in 1875, and surely the same words may be repeated and we may say that this clause and the conditions which the clause has created will be just as useful to the people of the Northwest Territories on the 1st day of July as they will be on the 30th day of June.

Now, I have not been discussing the constitutional question as my hon. friend will observe. I have been discussing entirely what I may call the practical side of the question, and I do that with the firm conviction that most of the people of this country will not bother themselves very much about this constitutional question but they will want to get at the actual facts of

this very important subject. We are proposing by this legislation to confirm certain Acts of the Northwest Territories. We are proposing to continue certain legislation, to continue for a further time and for ever the school system which now exists. We are met with the statement that the position of the Liberal party in that respect is different to-day from the position which it held in the case of Manitoba. We have heard that from the hon. leader of the opposition to-day. I think it will have to be admitted, after a careful examination of the situation, that the conditions in respect to the Northwest Territories are widely and entirely different from the conditions that existed in connection with the proposed legislation for the province of Manitoba. It was proposed by the Remedial Bill of 1896 to override an Act of the legislature of Manitoba, passed by the voice of the people of that province, and, as subsequently was maintained, entirely within the legislative authority of that province. We do not propose to override any Act of any legislature. What we propose to-day is to confirm and continue for all future time a measure which the free voice of the Northwest legislature has placed upon the statute-book of the Territories. So that, on that point, there is a wide difference between the condition of affairs in respect to Manitoba and the condition of affairs in respect to the Northwest Territories. Then again it was said and with some justice that an effort was made to coerce the province of Manitoba, because it was proposed to pass an Act against which the government of Manitoba entered a solemn protest. There is no protest from the government of the Northwest Territories against this measure. I make that statement advisedly. The premier of the Northwest Territories, an estimable gentleman who has been taking part in this discussion, as properly he should, has written a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada, but I am informed and believe that that letter expresses his individual opinion and it is not authorized by the government of the Northwest Territories. So, in the case of Manitoba I repeat that the proposition was to do something against which the government of Manitoba protested. In this case we are doing something against which the government of the Northwest Territories have entered no protest whatever. Then, there is a further consideration. I suppose the people in the Northwest Territories have the best right to speak through their acknowledged representatives. I have no right to say what will be the views expressed by my hon. friends from the Northwest Territories on the other side of the House, but it is understood—I do not state it from direct communication with my hon. friends from the Northwest Territories—but it is understood and believed that this legislation is accepted and will be supported by seven out of ten members from the Northwest. Well, if there is no great matter of