

to give them extra terms by the legislation of this House. The thing that is important in this matter is that whatever Act we pass now, so far as I have understood the debate will be permanent so far as this parliament is concerned, and any change that is made will have to be made by the imperial parliament. It is important, therefore, that we should go slowly; and it is very important that this should be debated from every standpoint, because if we make a mistake now it will be a lasting mistake. The Prime Minister when he brought this Bill down said that there were four subjects which dominated all the others. The first was:

How many provinces should be admitted into the confederation coming from the Northwest Territories—one, or two or more?

They have decided on two, and have apparently decided to leave Manitoba as it is, so far as any extension west is concerned.

Then the next question was:

In whom should be vested the ownership of the public lands?

They decided that they would keep the land. The only advantage I can see in their keeping the lands is that they will be able to use them for political influence. It will not be any advantage to us from a financial or any other standpoint.

What should be the financial terms to be granted to these new provinces?

They have been liberal, but I certainly would not have complained of that if they had not kept the lands and then the premier said:

And the fourth and not the least important by any means was the question of the school system which would be introduced—not introduced because it was introduced long ago, but should be continued in the Territories.

That I think is where the premier made a mistake; that is where he talks of these Territories as though they were provinces and as though we were bound to retain these Acts with reference to separate schools in the Territories just as if they had been provinces. If I understood the legal arguments which have been advanced in this House at all, I think that does not apply. Then, Sir, we had a speech from the hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) on the constitutional side of the question, and I think that every one who heard that speech and every one who has read it will concede that he really put the Prime Minister out of business so far as the constitutional aspect of the case is concerned. I fully expected that when our leader had finished speaking they would have put up the Minister of Justice to answer him and certainly they would have done so if the contention of the First Minister had been right because then the Minister of Justice would have been able to down our leader, but he is not easily downed. To my great surprise they put up the Min-

ister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and I was further surprised by the admissions he made. He differed entirely from the very beginning with his leader. He said:

My right hon. friend the First Minister has not declared that it is not within the power of this parliament to make a change. He has not declared that there is any legal or binding obligation resting on the parliament of Canada to re-enact the clauses of the Act of 1875.

I think that is exactly opposed to what the leader of the government contended for, and I think that if the leader of the government had felt that he was strong in his position after he had heard the speech of the hon. member for Carleton who leads the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) he certainly would have answered him in like manner, that is, he would have appointed a legal gentleman to answer the opposition leader. I find also that the Minister of Finance is not in favour of separate schools. He said that if he had his way personally, speaking for himself he would not go in for separate schools, he would leave that word 'separate' out of all schools. Then he went on to tell us that they had no separate schools by law in Nova Scotia, and he said that this was owing to the good fellowship that existed between the people there, because they divided up. Where there was a strong minority they had their schools, they had their teachers, I believe with the same examination as those for public schools, but although they had not a separate school by-law they had by the consent of the majority in that province. I am strongly of opinion that this Bill which has been introduced will not tend to make it easier to have separate schools in the western provinces than it would have been to have them without it. My own impression is that when you try to force a man to do something he does not want to do you will have a good deal of difficulty in making him do it. I understood the hon. gentlemen who have spoken to tell us that they have had no difficulty in the last few years with reference to separate schools. If that is the case I do not see why they want this enactment. The separate schools do not appear to have been a great success in that country anyway. I believe there are only about a dozen of them all told, nine Roman Catholic and two or three Protestant. These Protestant schools are as much separate schools, I presume, as the others.

I took some notes of what was said by the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) and I was astonished at the state of things existing in that country. I was especially surprised at his construing of the Act now before the House.

We are proposing to make these people fully responsible for their own self-government in the important matters of education, public works and all affairs of internal development.

The hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) seemed to think that there was