

in geography, lessons in arithmetic, along with his catechism and his holy scripture. When we have the young well educated in Christian morals and doctrine, as well as in secular matters, we can rely on the future of the country. When the Catholic minority come to the parliament of Canada and ask them to favour the sacred traditions of the Catholic people for religious instruction to a certain extent, they ask for it in the name of their conscience, but they ask for it also for the benefit of Canadian society. The more religious instruction you give to the child the better citizen you make of him. And we want in this country good citizens, people who will not live in idleness; we want the child, along with his secular education, to receive a good moral tuition and a good Christian tuition. As long as we ask for that in the name of conscience, why, in the name of the British flag, should you not give it to us? We are asking nothing from the Protestant majority alongside of us, we are only asking for the right to use our own money in order to educate our own children, so that they may become true Canadian citizens. We know from experience that other denominations do not hold the same view with regard to the necessity of religious instruction in the schools, and we do not object to that, yet this Bill gives to the Protestant majority and the Protestant minority the same privilege of giving religious instruction to their children during the half hour. I know there is scarcely a Christian mother in the western provinces who does not wish her child to receive a Christian education. I met the Christian mother in the Northwest. She spoke to me her love of her children and her devotion to their welfare and happiness. She spoke to me of her attachment to the religious education of her children, and her desire that they should receive a good moral education at the same time, in order that they might grow up to be honest and useful citizens. We must remember that civilization carries with it some dangers which only a Christian education can counteract, and without such Christian education the result will be disastrous, not only to the family, but to society in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I have established in a most irrefutable manner that the people who go into the Northwest provinces have a right to enjoy the same privileges that they received at home. I regret as much as does the member for Beauharnois that our Catholic people are not accorded still greater privileges than will be given them under this law. But the constitution allows us to grant only what we now possess, and what we hold now we are bound to guarantee by this Autonomy Bill. It is not a question of political power for this parliament, it is a question of granting school privileges to the minority in the new provinces. In 1875, when the parliament of

Canada decided unanimously to give separate schools to the people of the Northwest, the parliament had power to make them lasting. In 1875, when the parliament of Canada gave to 'that class of persons,' to use the language of the judgment of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, rights and privileges in regard to educational matters in the Northwest Territories, it gave them for ever. To-day this parliament is not confronted with a question of whether or not it has power to do a certain thing; it is confronted with a simple duty to preserve the rights established by the Act of 1875. Parliament had the power at that time, as Mr. Blake plainly stated. Mr. Blake's language has already been quoted in this House, but I may be permitted to read it again:

The task which the ministry had set for itself was the most important it was possible to conceive. To found primary institutions under which we hope to see hundreds of thousands, and the more sanguine of us think, millions of men and families settled and flourishing, was one of the noblest undertakings that could be entered upon by any legislative body, and it was no small indication of the power and true position of this Dominion that parliament should be engaged to-day in that important task. He agreed with the hon. member for Kingston (Sir John A. Macdonald) that the task was one that required time, consideration and deliberation, and they must take care that no false steps were made in such a work. He did not agree with that right hon. gentleman that the government ought to repeal his errors. The right hon. gentleman had tried the institutions for the Northwest Territories which he now asked the House to frame, and for the same reason as he had given to-day—that it would be better for the Dominion government to keep matters in their own hands and decide what was best for the future. He (Mr. Blake) believed that it was essential to our obtaining a large immigration to the Northwest that we should tell the people beforehand what those rights were to be in the country in which we invited them to settle.

He regarded it as essential, under the circumstances of the country, and in view of the deliberation during the last few days, that a general principle should be laid down in the Bill with respect to public instruction. He did believe that we ought not to introduce into that territory the heart burnings and difficulties with which certain other portions of the Dominion and other countries had been afflicted. It seemed to him, having regard to the fact that, as far as we could expect at present, the general character of that population would be somewhat analogous to the population of Ontario, that there should be some provision in the constitution by which they should have conferred upon them the same rights and privileges in regard to religious instruction as those possessed by the people of the province of Ontario. The principles of local self-government and the settling of the question of public instruction seemed to him ought to be the cardinal principles of the measure.

At that time it was within the power of the Dominion parliament to grant or not to