

ination is sounded. It was sounded, even in 1875, against Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, who was attacked by a few Tory newspapers, in connection with the organization of the Northwest Territories, as will be seen in a moment, although with less violence than we see exhibited to-day by the Toronto 'News' and the Toronto 'World.'

At that time, the school question was a live issue and was a subject of great anxiety for Catholics over the whole world. Look into the newspapers of those days. Mr. Speaker, and you will find the proof of that statement. In the United States, in the state and the city of New York especially, Catholics were energetically vindicating their rights. An Oblate priest, the Reverend Father Warren, was anathematizing Catholic parents who sent their children to public schools. Those sermons had been commented upon in the European, American and Canadian press. We were ourselves, in Canada, greatly agitated over the New Brunswick school legislation of 1871. That question had been discussed in this House for three consecutive sessions. It was used as a political machine in the province of Quebec, by the Ultramontane school, by Messrs. Langevin, Masson, Baby and Mousseau. The representatives of the people felt the necessity of putting an end to national and religious strife, if the federal system, then at its inception and based on good faith, was to be maintained. That is why the school legislation relative to the Northwest was carried through this House post haste. In the Upper House, the Bill was carried by a vote of 24 against 22, on an amendment moved by the hon. Mr. Aikens, exactly to the same effect as that of the hon. leader of the opposition. But the question was such a burning one, the public mind was so deeply agitated over the school legislation of New Brunswick, and the stand taken by the Hon. George Brown was so uncompromising, that such legislation could not pass unnoticed by the public press.

In recalling the discussion to which this question gave rise thirty years ago, in the newspapers, I think I am supplying fresh argument in support of this Bill, further proof that the Bill of 1875, in the minds of its promoters, was to settle the question once for all. Then, it should be remembered that, at the time, those who had taken an active part in bringing about confederation were still in public life. Scarcely eight years had elapsed since the passing of the compact, and the spirit of conciliation which inspired the fathers of confederation had not yet completely died away. I shall show that the law of 1875 was approved in Ontario and in Quebec by the two leading political organs of Sir John A. Macdonald. As regards the French Canadian Conservative newspapers, they claimed credit for their own party for the establishment of

separate schools in the Northwest, while the Liberal newspapers, pointed to that legislation as a proof of the Mr. Mackenzie's breadth of mind. The 'Globe' the Montreal 'Herald' approved of the Bill introduced by the Mackenzie government, without any restriction, that is to say, without making any special mention of the separate schools question.

Le 'National,' organ of the Liberal party in Montreal, on the 16th March, 1875, under the heading 'Always just,' expressed itself as follows:

None of the honest and truthful organs of the party which boasts of its high principles, has yet called attention to the fact, quite remarkable as it is, that the hon. Mr. Mackenzie, in his Bill for the establishment of the Northwest, has made provision for separate schools.

If the Prime Minister had not shown himself so wise and just in that respect, what an uproar would there not have been from the organs of those who voted against Mr. Bourassa's amendment when, at the time the confederation scheme was adopted, he requested that all minorities be dealt with in the same way as the hon. Mr. Mackenzie has just dealt with the settlers of the Northwest.

Conservative newspapers will be fair and truthful by the time oysters grow a beard.

The Montreal 'Gazette,' on the date of March 17th, 1875, under the heading 'The Northwest Territories,' wrote as follows:

#### THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES.

The Bill introduced by Mr. Mackenzie for the organization of the Northwest Territories is one of the most important that has been submitted to parliament since the union. We take it there is no serious intention of asking the House to accept this measure this session. Its importance is so great, that to attempt to pass it into law at the far end of a session, when members are impatient to get to their homes, and intolerant therefore of debate, would be a great mistake. But its introduction has been a wise proceeding, as it will give ample time for its fair and full consideration before another session. The Bill seeks to fix the constitution which is to govern these vast territories in the future. Sir John Macdonald, without committing himself directly to the opinion, expressed some doubts as to whether this is a wise proceeding. His suggestion was that it would be better that the parliament of Canada should keep within its control the determination in the future of the precise form of government suited to these Territories as they became more developed, and as population flowed into them. There is doubtless some force in the view, but upon consideration it will be found, we think, Mr. Mackenzie has adopted the wise course. Looking to the encouragement of immigration into the Northwest there can be little doubt of the importance of having the character of the institutions under which, in the future, these immigrants will have to live, settled in advance. It will avoid all disputes and difficulties, all questions of negotiations about terms between unorganized but tolerably large communities and the government of the Dominion,