

lieve that if any hon. member in this House, even if he represents the most Protestant constituency, would go to his county and say: 'Here is the treatment which is accorded to our fellow citizens in the province of Quebec, here is the treatment which is accorded not only under the written law but under the law of the humane heart of the French Canadians who even at the time when they were persecuted by the British Crown always gave an ample measure of justice to the Protestant minority. Now, we ask you to stand by us in giving the same treatment to the Catholics of the western provinces that the Protestants have in the east. We ask you to remain true to the pledges given to that effect by the greatest statesmen of this country—I do not believe that such language would fail to bring a fair reply from the good people of Ontario.

Let the Liberals be true to the memory of Mr. Blake, of Mr. Mackenzie and even of Mr. George Brown, because when Mr. George Brown made up his mind that this compact should be observed, he was courageous enough to say that it should be observed in fact and for ever. So far as hon. gentlemen opposite are concerned, I do not wish, on an occasion like this, to speak from a party point of view. I may say to the leader of the opposition, for whom, on all other questions I have had up to this time the greatest respect, that when I listened to him the other day, I came to the conclusion that he was not speaking for the Conservative party, he was not showing himself to be the heir of Sir John A. MacDonald and Sir Charles Tupper, but he was only voicing the opinions of a gentleman who was obliged to find an abode in the county of Carleton in order to obtain a seat in this House. The hon. gentleman is broad enough—I render him that justice—he is broad enough by birth, by nature and by education to be fair-minded, that he had not the courage to stand by his new flag; and he felt obliged to gather up a pile of small documents and papers behind which to shelter himself in his denial of justice.

We have frequently been told: Why can't you trust the majority of the people of the Northwest? Well, Sir, here again I must speak frankly; and I say: No, we cannot. Suppose we could trust the people who are living there now; is there a man in this House childish enough to say that the condition of things which exists now is sure to exist in the Northwest fifty years hence? What will be the population up there? Who knows what feelings will dominate the majority there? Who knows but that the great majority of the people there will be settlers coming from a land where the idea, not only of non-sectarian schools but of Godless schools, now prevails, and to my mind, to the great detriment of the future of the republic? Who can tell what the future will be? But confining my-

self entirely to a survey of past events, I say now that we cannot trust the present majority of the people of the Northwest to stand for right and justice. Their record is before us. It is my intention to make a comparison, for the enlightenment of our friends up there, if my words can reach them, and for the enlightenment of my English speaking Protestant friends in the House and out of it; I am going to make a comparison between the history of the school legislation in the Northwest and the history of the school legislation in Quebec, and I am ready to abide by the judgment that will be passed by any fair minded man, if not by his vote, at least by his conscience.

The leader of the opposition made another fine legal argument to show that the people of the Northwest have never legislated on that subject. I admit that from a narrow legal point of view the people of the Northwest did not legislate freely, because they were bound by the Northwest Territories Act, just as this parliament cannot legislate freely because we are bound by the British North America Act, and just as any parliament in this country is not free because all the powers possessed by any legislative body in Canada is limited by imperial legislation. But I presume that we can ascertain the feelings of the people of the Northwest by considering their legislation. In 1885, ten years after the Northwest Territories Act was passed, legislation was enacted by the legislature which, within its scope, was just as free as this parliament. And what did they do? As the ex-Minister of the Interior clearly told us the other day, they passed a law quite in accord with the letter and with the spirit of clause 11 of the Act of 1875. They passed a law similar to the one we have in Quebec, a law by which Catholics had the management of their own schools, had the choice of their own text books, and had the right to have their schools inspected by men of their own creed—but all under government supervision. They enjoyed separate schools, not only in name but in fact, as the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) well stated the other day. The inspectors had to be appointed by the government, but they were chosen by the Catholic section, just as in the province of Quebec Protestant schools are inspected by inspectors chosen by the Protestant section of the Board of Education. The books used in the separate schools of the Northwest were also selected by the Catholic section, and approved by the government. That state of things went on for some years, and then, in 1892, after several other ordinances had been passed, the separate school system, as the member for Brandon stated the other day, was wiped out. Lately, Mr. Haultain, who is now here claiming liberties for his people, has given utterance to his lofty opinions on this matter, he has