

French Canadians who will speak on this question—that I who rise to speak on behalf of the French language in the Northwest am using the English language in this House. Yes, I am using the English language to protect the French language in the Northwest, because I trust more in the broad-mindedness and the spirit of fair-play of the English members of this House than I do in the courage of my French Canadian compatriots. My fellow-countrymen are laughing at that remark. With their actual position how can they dare smile? They have shown the extent of their courage in speaking on behalf of a motion to take away from their brothers in the Northwest the language which they are so proud to speak. We can hear some of these gentlemen speaking and singing loudly on St. Jean Baptiste day. I do not make many speeches or sing much of the glories of the past or the hopes of the future on St. Jean Baptiste day; but I am ready to rise in this House and defend the rights of my fellow-countrymen in the Northwest, even against my own party. I trust that my English speaking fellow members, with that broad-mindedness and that spirit of fair-play which distinguish their race, will be ready as brothers and compatriots to give us justice, even though some French Canadians do not ask for it.

Mr. MONK. My hon. friend the Minister of the Interior seemed to be very much embarrassed as to the interpretation of the amendment which I have presented to the House that even after a lengthy discussion with the leader of the opposition, he seems still not to understand the gist of it. I told my hon. friend that it might be modified. There is no doubt that the sub-amendment presented by the hon. member for Labelle more clearly expresses the full extent of the rights that were granted in 1870 and subsequently consecrated by legislation. If my hon. friend has any doubt as to the meaning of my amendment, he had better vote with me for the sub-amendment of the hon. member for Labelle. I thought my hon. friend would take a larger view of this question, and deal with it on its merits as the right hon. leader of the government did, instead of spending most of his argument in trying to cast obscurity on the amendment as I drafted it. I may say that it is only a repetition of the law as it was drafted in 1890. The Minister of Inland Revenue and the Solicitor General have said again and again—it is their hackneyed defence—that those who bring up the question of this kind do so for the purpose of creating an agitation. Is my hon. friend serious in that? Is it his opinion that we have such a low regard for our duties and our responsibilities as members of this House as to bring up a question of this kind for the mere purpose of laying a foundation for an unfruitful and unhealthy agitation? Is that the opinion he entertains of the hon. mem-

ber for Labelle? I have known that hon. gentleman since he was a boy, and I can say that his career is of such a nature that no man who is acquainted with him and who knows something of his qualities and his earnestness would dream that underneath the speech he has made here to-day is concealed an intention of going down to the province of Quebec and agitating his compatriots. And has my hon. friend the audacity to state before this committee that I have that intention? My hon. friend knows perfectly well that after the general election of 1896, I stated at a caucus of which a report appeared in the Montreal 'Gazette,' that I would not at any public meeting refer to the school question. Have I ever done so on any one of the many platforms where I appeared? I would look upon it as one of the most culpable acts a man could be guilty of if, having brought this important question to the notice of this House, as he was in duty bound to do, he should use it afterwards for the sinister purpose of arousing his fellow-countrymen of French origin against the rest of the population. It is my hon. friend who on every occasion has done that miserable work. He did it in the last election in my own county, and no one knows better than he does how he was received on that occasion, and what effect his words had—none. I am a politician; we are all politicians in this House—who will deny it; but we draw the line, those of us who have any sense of their duty, at questions of this kind. I have only done to-day what was incumbent upon me; but does my hon. friend not know me well enough to know that I would not prostitute to such uses the discussion that we have had here to-day? He knows it full well. The right hon. the Prime Minister who, I will do him the justice to say, attacked this question upon its merits—not quibbling, like his colleague, the Minister of Inland Revenue—has contended that we are bound by the British North America Act.

My hon. friend knows very well that in this very statute, under the inspiration of the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Inland Revenue was holding that we are not bound by the British North America Act, and that we are bound by the Act under section 109 to leave to the two new provinces their Crown lands. My hon. friend knows perfectly well where we have departed from that principle. We are taking those lands from those two provinces and saddling Quebec and the older provinces with a useless debt to pay for these lands, and we are doing this in violation of the British North America Act, not illogically since it is contended by the government we are not bound by that Act. When we insert in this Bill a special clause to continue the exemption granted to the Canadian Pacific Railway we are not bound by the British North America Act, we are holding these two new provinces for all time bound by the agree-