

securities of Canada, to form a school fund, and the interest arising therefrom, after deducting the cost of management, shall be paid annually to the government of the province or territory within which such lands are situated, towards the support of public schools therein; and the moneys so paid shall be distributed for that purpose by the government of such province or territory in such manner as it deems expedient.

Now, from the statement which was made to all Canada the other day, we must infer that the Dominion Lands Act is to be changed, and that in the province of Manitoba these school lands, which are now consecrated to public schools, not to separate schools, are to be sold, and the proceeds distributed in an entirely different way. That follows from the statement made here the other day, and on behalf of Manitoba I protest to-day against any such change in the law, or any such chastisement being meted out to that province as is proposed by this organ of the government. That organ wants Manitoba chastised because of certain laws which that province has passed in connection with the school lands, and yet this same organ is the mouthpiece of this government, of which the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) is a member, and of which the late premier of Manitoba (Mr. Greenway) is an ardent supporter. If any wrong has been wrought to the Roman Catholic minority of Manitoba in connection with the school question, is not that due to the Minister of the Interior and the late premier of Manitoba? They it was who caused the Manitoba legislation now complained of to be enacted. It was the Liberal party which passed it, and did so in the interests of that province. Yet to-day we have the Dominion government, of which these gentlemen are the mainstay, threatening, through its leading organ, to chastise Manitoba because of that very legislation. That organ says to the province of Manitoba: You shall not extend your bounds, you shall continue in the lowly inferior position you now occupy. On behalf of that province, and because these gentlemen are not here to raise their voices in its behalf, I raise mine.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I raise my protest because the proposal about to be made here is of a most far reaching character. Not only the school lands of Manitoba, but the whole educational fund of that province, is to be changed by a general Act, which must follow from what was said here the other day. I draw the attention of the right hon. gentleman to this. If these important changes are to be made on the lines laid down by him, then it follows that remedial legislation is in order as concerns Manitoba. The argument is an a fortiori one. Remedial legislation must follow, and it will be introduced in this House by the right hon. gentleman who warned the coun-

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try against such legislation eight years ago. There is this prospect for Manitoba, that all her schools lands are, in every probability, to be diverted this very session of parliament to other purposes than those to which they are devoted to-day by a general Act amending the Dominion Lands Act. Furthermore the Manitoba school funds are to be diverted by legislation which must follow as a logical sequence from the statement made the other day. Logically the right hon. gentleman is bound to introduce a Bill remedying the school grievances of the minority in the province of Manitoba, and yet these very so called grievances are due to the Minister of the Interior of this government and his friend (Mr. Greenway) who, I am told, is to be his immediate successor in this government. It was to give these hon. gentlemen an opportunity here to repudiate this language, to say they could not be parties to any such legislation, that I brought this matter up to-day; and in all probability the absence of the hon. the Minister of the Interior from this House ever since the beginning of this session and the absence of the hon. member for Lisgar, (Mr. Greenway) to-day are due to their desire to shirk their manifest duty in connection with this matter. The hon. the Minister of the Interior was here only for a moment the other day, and his absence no doubt is due, as well as that of the other hon. gentleman, to what is in the immediate future in store for them. If what was foreshadowed the other day is to happen, it must follow that those school lands are to be diverted from their present purpose and a Remedial Bill introduced this session, and the party, which claims to be the defender of provincial rights from one end of the country to the other, is to-day doing nothing to prevent the shackles being put on the provinces of this great and free Dominion. These provinces are to-day free, and my right hon. friend must know that if there is one thing which the people who breathe the free air of the prairies, the people of the great west, value, it is their political liberty; and if the right hon. gentleman insists on shackling these people in connection with the dispossession of their school lands, he will make a great mistake. He apparently does not understand the genius of the western people if he thinks that by aid of any constitutional argument, he can interfere with the school lands of the province of Manitoba. I leave the case for the present but may have to return to it.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. But I shall wait until the Minister of the Interior is in his place. Again I call the attention of the right hon. gentleman to the absence of a number of his ministers from this House. The Minister of Public Works (Mr. Sutherland) is not here. I regret that he is ill, but the constitutional practice is that when a minister is not able to take his place in