

ably knew more about the circumstances and the history of that country than any other man he had in his cabinet, and probably than any other man in this country, went to the Northwest, if not under seal and pledge not to open his mouth with reference to the conditions of the creation of those provinces into an autonomy, yet certainly practically carrying out such instructions by absolutely refusing to be led into the utterance of a single word which would go to show the people of the Northwest under what probable or possible conditions autonomy should be given. But it cannot be said that the question was not mooted. The premier of that country, speaking in Regina one week before the Minister of the Interior spoke there, challenged an expression of opinion from the Minister of the Interior; left a certain number of questions to be answered, if the Minister of the Interior would have the goodness to answer them, as to the information to be given to the people of the Northwest just then, when they were about to elect representatives who would be called upon to consummate the Act of formation into provinces, as to the conditions, with reference to territorial division, lands, education and finances, under which the new provinces would be brought in. Was it not a subject which might well have engaged the attention of the Minister of the Interior? Were those points of information which it would not have been right and proper for the minister to discuss before the people whose interests were chiefly to be affected? But the minister's only reply was: You must trust the government; and to the gentleman who put the question his only reply was, you are a mischief-maker, that is what you are. The question was also put to the candidates who were running in the Northwest. They were challenged. They had one reply—the reply of the drilled and the taught: You ask us what the probable conditions will be; we trust the government; we have faith in the government. The cry of the minister was: Trust the government; and the declaration of the candidates was: We have faith in the government. But from neither minister nor candidate was there a single intimation as to what would be the probable conditions. So much with reference to that. Carrying out my hypothesis, when the elections were over and the first of the probable five years of the government's term commenced, with those incidental advantages which every one knows quite well, immediately negotiations were taken up, immediately the government set to work, immediately the Northwest candidates who were elected were called into council, immediately the representatives of the government of the Northwest Territories were called to Ottawa. Negotiations were undertaken, conferences took place, and in the course of a few weeks or a few

months parliament was called together and the Bill was introduced. The creative instrument was formed, and it was presented to parliament. That creative instrument, as it was brought down on the 21st of February, was accompanied by a certificate of parentage given to it by the premier. He himself as premier, his united government, the representatives of the Northwest, on that side of the House at least, whose advice he had the advantage of, and the representatives of the government of the Northwest Territories, all had had their part in consultation or information; and this child was brought forward with the certificate of parentage of a strong and united government, having had full consultation with the representatives of the Territories to be affected. Shortly after that was brought down, something occurred. A trouble arose, disruption took place, and within a few days one of the most considerable ministers of the cabinet handed in his resignation, and gave as his reason that he had not been consulted with reference to the educational clause, that he dissented from it on the record of his life, and on account of the principles so often and so loudly professed, and that on that account he could not remain longer a member of the government. We immediately asked explanations and we soon found out that another minister of the government,—if not the most important at least one of the most important—had not been consulted upon the measure. Absent from the city and absent from the country, he had not been allowed an opportunity—why such haste?—of reading the clause of the Bill before it was brought down to this House. There were then two facts of importance. There was the fact that the government, as a united body had not formed that measure and there was the additional fact that there was displayed a haste almost undignified to get the Bill before the House and the country before those two important members of the cabinet should have an opportunity of being present in Council and expressing their views. What was still more remarkable was this, that on the most important clauses of the Bill, two members of the cabinet, who had been the strongest in their opposition to the principles embodied in that clause, were the very two members in whose temporary absence the Bill had been passed by the Council and submitted to parliament.

Other facts came out. It became known in the course of time that if the members from the Northwest supporting the government had been consulted and if they had been aware of the import of the clauses in question, they had not been careful enough or had been too indifferent to make their opinion felt. These hon. gentlemen, every one of them, so far as I know, expressed his dissent immediately after the Bill was brought down and the