

we find that they were first demanded by the Protestant minority in the province of Quebec and that they were established principally for the protection and safety of that minority. Those of us who have read the pre-confederation debates must realize that Sir A. T. Galt, who made himself the principal champion of the rights of the Protestant minority, who discussed the question on the public platform and debated it during the conferences, who went to London to argue in favour of it, every one of us, I say, must recognize that Sir A. T. Galt in demanding these privileges for the minority of the province of Quebec must have foreseen that in all decency and in all fairness similar privileges must be accorded to other minorities in other parts of the Dominion. There can be no dispute about that, and indeed ever since confederation that principle has been crystallized in the legislation of this parliament. In 1870, when Manitoba was admitted into the confederation, the legislation enacted in this federal parliament purposed to establish a system of separate schools in the prairie province, but perhaps through bungling here and through bad faith elsewhere the intention of parliament was not carried out. But, Sir, even that lapse does not alter the fact that it is in the spirit of our constitution which this parliament has tried to live up to, that with respect to education minorities should have special protection. Let me speak of the conditions existing in the province of Quebec with which I am familiar. I consider myself fortunate that I was brought up in a province in which people of different races and different creeds are able to work harmoniously together for the welfare of our common country; I consider myself fortunate in this because it has given me the opportunity to understand some things which men situated differently have not had the opportunity of realizing. At confederation, in 1867, the Protestant minority of Quebec were granted separate school privileges, and the carrying out of that understanding was placed largely in the hands of the Catholic majority. I am prepared to say here, Sir, that from 1867 to the present day not only has the spirit of our constitutional guarantee been faithfully adhered to by the Roman Catholic majority, but that the majority has shown itself in all respects and at all times generous in its treatment of the Protestants and has done everything it possibly could to promote good feeling and harmony. I am happy to be able to state in this parliament of Canada to-day that there is perhaps no country in the world where people of different origins and different creeds live together in such accord as in the province of Quebec. There is no country, I believe, which affords such a good example of the good that can be brought about where the majority and the minority are disposed to be fair to each other. Everybody knows that in the very nature of things

Mr. PARMELEE.

a minority is apt to be timid and suspicious, but, Sir, the Protestant minority in the province of Quebec have never had reason to complain. We have no complaints as to our treatment in the past, and in spite of many bitter things that have been said in this debate; in spite of the regrettable appeals to Protestant prejudice against the minority in the west, we, the Protestant minority of the Province of Quebec, have no apprehension in the future that the Roman Catholic majority will make this an occasion for reprisals upon us. I may, Sir, that the minority in the province of Quebec confidently believe that they will be treated just as fairly and just as generously in the future as though this debate had never taken place. The policy of the majority in the province of Quebec has ever been to treat the Protestant minority in a spirit of fair play, and I would ask if that is not a good policy; good for the majority, good for the minority and good for the welfare of our common country? Providence has bestowed on us the greatest among the earth's heritages; we have the freest of constitutions suitable to our necessities and desires; we are placed here in this fair land, men of different races and religions, to work together for the welfare of our country, and I appeal to my friends on both sides of this House if the best policy for us to pursue is not that very policy of toleration, of broad-mindedness and of fair play which has characterized the dealings of the Catholic majority in Quebec with the Protestant minority of that province.

It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that in starting these new provinces on their career, a constitution that is good enough for the province of Quebec, and which, by the way, is good enough for the great province of Ontario, ought to be good enough for Alberta and Saskatchewan. A few moments ago I glanced over a manifesto issued under the authority, or at any rate with the approval, of my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule). The hon. gentleman starts out in this manifesto by declaring how desirable it is that in a country like Canada we should have peace, but he immediately proceeds to make for peace by a declaration of war. It is contended that the schools in the Northwest should be national schools, and I know that the argument is often made that national schools are absolutely non-sectarian and that an adherent of any particular faith might go to a national school without doing violence to his religious convictions or his conscientious scruples in any way. Well, Mr. Speaker, we might as well discuss this question frankly, fairly and candidly. That statement is not founded on fact. The views of Protestants and Catholics in respect to education are so radically different that there is no possibility of reconciling them, and that being so, it seems to me that we should follow the example set in the province of Que-