

and licensing of its teachers and for the withdrawing of licenses upon sufficient cause; to make and enforce regulations for the establishment and operation of departments in such of its schools as it may deem suitable for the preparation of candidates for the annual examination of teachers, and for matriculating at the University of Manitoba, and for the doing of general literary work corresponding to the standard required for these examinations, and to give special aid to such schools from the funds of its disposal not exceeding in the aggregate one-twelfth of its appropriation; provided that no schools shall be entitled to receive such special aid that does not comply fully with the regulations made by the board for its operation.

These are the gentlemen who are objecting, who are holding up both hands in holy horror at the idea of throttling the Northwest by continuing its present system of separate schools. The provisions of section 15 are intended to protect us Protestants of the Northwest against legislation of that kind at some future date. In regard to the distribution of public funds I find this in section 74:

The right to share proportionate claims, in any grant made out of public funds for the purposes of education having been decided to be and being now one of the rights and privileges of the said Roman Catholic minority of Her Majesty's subjects in the province of Manitoba, any sum granted by the legislature of Manitoba and appropriated for the separate schools shall be placed to the credit of the board of education in accounts to be opened in the books of the treasury department and in the audit office.

No question about that. I find further in section 111:

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may direct that a sum not exceeding one-tenth of the amount of the grant for educational purposes be allowed for the maintenance of normal school departments as hereby established.

We do not want any legislation of that kind in the Northwest Territories, or for the Northwest. Now I want to make myself clear, for I believe I speak for many people in the Northwest on this subject. We object to separate schools, not on religious grounds at all, but merely on the grounds of efficiency and economy. But we can see that in the Northwest, under present conditions, separate schools conducted as they are to-day, do not seriously affect either efficiency or economy. Therefore we do not seriously object to these schools as they are to-day. But what we do object to, what we did object to in 1891, was the feature embodied in this Remedial Bill, thoroughly embodied in it, and that was the principle of absolute clerical control of schools. That is what we do not want, that is what we would not submit to. We had that clerical control of schools from 1884 to 1891, and as the ex-Minister of the Interior has said to-day with regard to Manitoba, that system was abused. It may

Mr. OLIVER.

be a good system in theory, it may be a good system in practice, in some cases, but we did not find it so. I was a member of the legislature which changed the conditions of the school law of the Northwest and made the schools strictly national. We have separate schools in the Northwest, but we have not a separate school system in the Northwest. We concede, and I am glad to say that we willingly concede, to our Roman Catholic fellow citizens the right to pay their own taxes to their own schools, to elect their own trustees, to hire teachers of their own faith, and to give religious instruction for one-half hour each day in their schools. I believe that is a reasonable provision, and while I cannot say that I approve of it, still I do approve of it to this extent, that it satisfies the religious convictions of a large and important part of the population, whose religious convictions are entitled to the most careful and fullest consideration.

So far I am prepared to go and justify myself here or anywhere else. Beyond that point, to hand our schools, or any section of our schools, over to the control of a body not directly responsible to the people of the country through their votes, I certainly do not approve of and the people of the Northwest Territories would not approve of. We have an efficient school system in the Northwest Territories, a very efficient school system. It is a national school system, essentially national, and because it is national we approve of it. There is no occasion, there has been no occasion and there has been no justification in any way, shape or manner for the attacks that have been made upon this subject of separate schools as a matter of party politics within the last two or three weeks in this country.

It may be a matter of information to the members of this House to say that while the returns show only ten or fifteen separate schools in the Territories, there are, I suppose, upwards of a hundred Catholic schools. Wherever the Catholic people are in the majority, they elect their own trustees, form their own school district, hire their own teachers and direct what form of religion shall be taught in the half hour allotted to religion. These are public schools; they are not separate schools, and yet they are Catholic schools. So, I say that in the Northwest Territories we have the Catholics sharing in the public school system just the same whether they are separated from the original districts or whether they form the original district; we have a national school system and it is not throttling the Northwest Territories and it is not doing an injustice or an injury to the Northwest Territories to provide for a continuation of that system, especially if by so doing you provide against the possibility of such a condition as was attempted to be thrust upon the province of Manitoba not many years ago.

In regard to the other provisions of this