

The second subsection of section 93 of the British North America Act extended all the powers, privileges and duties which were then by law conferred and imposed in Upper Canada on the separate schools and school trustees of the Roman Catholic inhabitants of that province to the dissentient schools of the Protestant and Roman Catholic inhabitants of Quebec. There can be no doubt that the views of the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Quebec and Ontario with regard to education were shared by the members of the same communion in the territory which afterwards became the province of Manitoba. They regarded it as essential that the education of their children should be in accordance with the teaching of their church, and considered that such an education could not be obtained in public schools designed for all the members of the community alike, whatever their creed, but could only be secured in schools conducted under the influence and guidance of the authorities of their church.

As I have said on a previous occasion it is most extraordinary that we should have to go to the Privy Council of England, to the Protestant statesmen of England, to have a clear interpretation of what our rights are. In this parliament, representatives of the Roman Catholic minority are ready to accept as satisfactory to the needs of their own fellow countrymen and co-religionists what according to Lord Herschell, cannot and does not constitute what is regarded as essential by the Roman Catholics. Surely I will not be accused of being more fanatical or bigoted than Lord Herschell. I think I am safe in saying that I am not a fanatic or a bigot because I still claim for my fellow countrymen in the Northwest Territories that justice shall be given to the minority there. Four years after the law of 1875 was adopted this parliament adopted an amendment to the Dominion Lands Act, in 1879, by which they adopted the principle of state aid to education. They laid aside, as is well known, two sections out of each township, the proceeds of the sale of which were to be placed in the hands of the Dominion government and the interest paid twice a year to the government of the Northwest Territories as well as to the government of Manitoba to be applied towards the support of schools. I suppose nobody will deny that the intention at that time was that the Catholic schools established under the authority of this government were entitled to receive their equal share as well as the schools established by the majority. Therefore, there was a subsection in clause 16, No. 1, as there is in clause 16, No. 2, simply fulfilling the moral obligation assumed by this parliament in 1879.

Now Sir, how did the Northwest Assembly proceed to act under the powers given to it by the Act of 1875. The Prime Minister has referred to the ordinance of 1884 as being the first school ordinance adopted by the Northwest Territories and as being the basis of their system up to the ordinance of 1892. I beg to differ with the hon. gen-

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tleman for the excellent reason that the ordinance of 1884 was never put in force, because it was found by the legislature that they had not the power to exercise the taxation part of it and it was only after an amendment was made to the Northwest Territories Act that they adopted the ordinance of 1885 which was the basis of the school ordinances of the Northwest Territories; so that the ordinance of 1884 was never put in force and cannot be considered the basis, though most of it is materially the same as the ordinance of 1885 except in one particular. The right hon. gentleman has read this afternoon the clause of the ordinance of 1884 which provided that no religious instruction, such as Bible reading or reciting or reading prayers, &c., was to be permitted in any public Catholic or Protestant school. The hon. gentleman has added that this remained the law of the Northwest Territories up to the present time. Again I beg to differ and if he refers to the ordinance of 1885 which was the first ordinance adopted, which was the basis of school legislation in the west for seven years, he will find that this clause of the ordinance of 1884 was struck out and that religious education was limited only so far as public schools were concerned. This is clause 78, of the legislation of 1885.

No religious instruction, such as Bible reading, or reciting, or reading or reciting prayers or asking questions or answering questions from any catechism shall be permitted in any public school of the Northwest Territories from the opening of such school at 9 o'clock in the forenoon until the hour of 3 o'clock in the afternoon, after which time any such religious instruction as is desired by the trustees may be given.

So that under the law of 1885 which remained the law until the passing of the ordinance in 1892, religious instruction was permitted in separate schools such as the trustees wanted to have. No interference was made by the local legislature, against their liberty, and it was only in 1892 that they returned to the legislation of 1884 which had never been put into force and which did not exist in the Territories until 1892. It was stated by the late Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) that the system which was established by the ordinance of 1885 was to all intents and purposes what is called a church system. Of course I understood the hon. gentleman's object. It was desired by him at that time to use the cry which was being started in this country by some members of the opposition, and everything which scented of church, bishops or hierarchy, was to be used for the purpose of frightening the government. The schools established in 1883 as well as the schools in Quebec were schools under the authority of the fathers of families, the authority of the ratepayers, who elected their trustees and conducted their schools according to their views as free citizens of this country as well as fathers of families and therefore were entitled to whatever