

the Catholics in this province. We hope that they will help us restore to the Catholics of the Northwest the rights of which they have been deprived, and I trust the Liberal party will continue to be just, as it has always been, to the minority.

Have the hon. member for Labelle and myself said anything more violent than was then said by the present Minister of Inland Revenue? Could I use any stronger language, and if I did not repeat it, I should be a coward. When my fellow countrymen are deprived of the rights granted to them by the constitution and guaranteed by every treaty relating to this country, I am proud enough to stand up here and say that we are being given, not a loaf of bread, but a stone. What is the object of the legislation which we are enacting at this moment? What is the object of these ordinances which we are re-affirming? It is this: You will find it stated in the report of the inspector of schools for Northern Alberta. Speaking of foreign languages—and the French language falls into that category—he said:

The quickest and surest method of assimilating the foreign elements in our population is through our schools. . . . The best teachers—better for not using the language of the locality—should be secured for these foreign schools. It might be well to offer a bonus to suitable teachers for these districts, the more especially as the nature of the accommodation is not always the most inviting.

Have I not the right to stand up here and say that I object to having the French language abolished and a bonus paid to professors and teachers who do not understand French, in order that they may more easily assimilate the French Canadian with the other people in the Northwest? What is the reason given by Dr. Goggin, late superintendent of education in the Territories, for abolishing the use of the French language? He says that if French is taught in the schools, the Germans, Doukhobors, Galicians and any other nationality would have the right to have their own language similarly taught. That may be, but it seems to me that there should be a difference made in this parliament between the French Canadians, who have been here 300 years, and the Galicians or Doukhobors or any other of the breeds imported lately. That is the position we take, and I think it is not using violent language or making appeals to passion or prejudice to claim the rights promised us most solemnly in the name of the Queen when the Northwest entered the union and were also promised us not later than the 21st of February last.

Mr. TURGEON. If I rise to address the committee at this hour it is because some references have been made to the position of the minority in the province of New Brunswick, from which I come, which were not only injudicious but unfounded on fact. We have had the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) contending that clause 93

of the British North America Act does not apply to the maritime provinces, but only to the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. Against that contention of the hon. gentleman, I would set the judgment of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick on the school question, given in 1872, and which has been our guide there ever since. And in that judgment the court declared, contrary to the opinion of the hon. member for East Grey, that the clause referred to of the British North America Act applies not only to the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, but to every province in confederation. That, it seems to me, effectively disposes of the argument of the hon. gentleman. In the speech which I had the honour to deliver on the second reading of this Bill, I thought I had made this point perfectly clear, but inasmuch as some hon. members evidently persist in holding the opposite contention, I thought it would not be at all out of place if I should refer to it again. With regard to the eloquent plea made by my hon. friend from Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), whose ability and knowledge and earnestness in the cause he advocates I fully recognize, I may assure the House that I deplore just as deeply as he possibly can the fact that our co-religionists and compatriots in the Northwest are not given these right and privileges which we, French Canadians and Catholics, so deeply cherish and should like to see enjoyed by all sections of our race and creed wherever settled. I see the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) shaking hands with the members for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), and Montmagny (Mr. A. Lavergne.)

Mr. Chairman, I hail this pleasing incident as a sign of the times and the best augury we could have for future conciliation and harmony, and I think the whole House will join with me in expressing the hope that out of this rather at times embittered discussion, a better feeling may result between all creeds and races, such as we have just had evidence of in the present rapprochement of the hon. member for East Grey and the hon. member for Montmagny, and that in the practical working out of the proposed law, the Catholic minority in the Northwest may secure a better and more generous treatment than a rigid adherence to the letter of the law might exact. As I said, Mr. Chairman, I regret that my compatriots and co-religionists in the Northwest are not given all the rights and privileges we desire they should enjoy. But we are not here to legislate according to sentiment. We are here to legislate according to the constitution, according to the limited powers given this parliament by the British North America Act which brought together our many provinces and territories. We are here to grant the minority for all time to come whatever rights and privileges they now possess under the law. I admit that by the Act of 1875, which was passed unanimously by both sides of this parliament—Liberals and Conservatives alike