

"My hon. friend has not attempted this afternoon to base his motion upon anything that can be found in the British North America Act. That Act expressly leaves the subject of language to the legislatures, with two exceptions only, namely, the Quebec legislature and this parliament. Section 133 is in these words:

Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the Houses of Parliament of Canada and of the Houses of the legislature of Quebec; and both those languages shall be used in the respective records and journals of those Houses; and either of those languages may be used by any person or in any pleading or process in or issuing from any court of Canada established under this Act, and in or from all or any of the courts of Quebec. The Acts of the parliament of Canada and of the legislature of Quebec shall be printed and published in both those languages.

"The very fact that here the French and English languages are made the official languages in the Dominion parliament and the Quebec legislature, necessarily excludes the other provinces from that provision, and leaves that subject to be dealt with by them as they may see fit in the best interests of the public. With regard to the schools, the matter is very different. There is no use discussing again the provision of the law in that respect, because we have been discussing it for months. But let me repeat, for the purpose of this debate, that the law says in, so many words, that where a separate school system is found to exist in any of the provinces admitted into the union, that system must be perpetuated and be given the privileges provided in section 93. No such privilege, however, exists for the use either of the English or French or any language, in any section of the British North America Act, and I did not understand my hon. friend

even to attempt to pretend that the constitutional right which he claims for the French language in the Territories is to be found in the four corners of the British North America Act. Therefore let any such contention as this be discarded. There is nothing in the British North America Act to support the motion made by my hon. friend."

French Language in N. W. T.

In 1877 an Act was passed by the Parliament of Canada authorizing the use of the French language in the North West Territories. In support of this change in the law it was stated that at that time there were as many French speaking people in the Territories as there were English speaking people. It was on that ground therefore that the use of the French language was granted in 1877. It was not granted as a result of a compact or as a constitutional right, but simply as a concession to the inherent sentiments of justice.

From 1877 on there was a greater increase in the English speaking population of the North West Territories than in the French. In 1890, Sir John A. Macdonald being Prime Minister, on motion of Sir John Thompson for the Conservatives, and supported by the Liberals, a resolution was adopted re-asserting as it were the previous legislation of the Parliament of Canada on the language question in the Territories; but in 1892 the Assembly of the North West Territories passed an ordinance abolishing the use of the French language as an official language, and the then Conservative Government at Ottawa with Sir John Abbott, Premier, did not disallow the ordinance. This course was taken on the advice of Sir John Thompson, then Minister of Justice at Ottawa. At the time (1905) Alberta and Saskatchewan were established into Provinces, the French language was not an official language in those portions of Canada except in so far as Section 133