

which Her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon him. I also congratulate the hon. member from Prince Edward Island on his preferment to the position of cabinet minister.

I now come to the question which is the principal object of these remarks. It has been my intention from the first to give it some consideration, but contrary to what might have been your expectation, my reference to that subject was to have been very brief. On the reception of the Order in Council, the Manitoba Legislature adjourned till May 9th, with a declaration on the part of the government that the delay was for the purpose of taking into consideration the warning they had received. It seemed to me that, under the circumstances, the best thing to do was to leave that matter at rest for the moment, so as to give the provincial authorities full and undisturbed opportunity to make up their mind. That was a kind of truce which I was quite disposed to observe and maintain. I quite realize the gravity of the situation; the question requires grave and calm consideration. No one is more impressed than I am with the responsibility that may fall upon us within a short period; no one is more desirous than I am to see this vexed question taken away from the political arena. My intention was simply to do what I feel to be a duty on my part, that is, to declare and express the complete satisfaction which the Order in Council has given to the minority, and to join in the hope so earnestly expressed by the mover and the seconder of the address, as well as by the hon. leader of the government, that the provincial authorities will at last come to their senses and will loyally and patriotically retrace their steps and do what is right. To that only were my remarks to be confined had not my hon. friend from Marquette entirely changed my mind by his own remarks on the same subject. I must confess that these remarks took me completely by surprise. I have always been one of the most attentive and patient listeners to the hon. gentleman and, though having serious doubts as to the advisability of realizing his commercial conceptions, still I could not help admiring his faith and his industrious and elaborate eloquence. Although he did not depart, I must admit, from his customary gentlemanly way of propounding his doctrines (I heard some one say his fads) he has gone so far astray in

this instance, and has forgotten his usual fairness to such an extent, that I am afraid he will have to make very great efforts to convince me on any other matters in future. It may be advisable to state, at the outset, that the minority in Manitoba never had, nor has it at present, any desire to interfere with the school legislation of the province in so far as non-Catholics are concerned. We never asked for any such interference. Let them have if they like what they call, very improperly, national schools. Different interpretations have been placed upon the Order in Council—some have said that it was mandatory, others that it was the very opposite. I confess I have not much concern as to these different interpretations. The Order in Council, to my mind, speaks for itself. I am sure there is no one in this Dominion having any doubt as to its effect. It is the fair warning required by the constitution to the provincial authorities of Manitoba that if they refuse or simply neglect to remove by proper legislation the grievances of the minority, this Parliament will be empowered to do what Manitoba should have done. Their inaction will have given jurisdiction to this Parliament according to the provisions of the constitution. The whole case is now in the hands of Manitoba and if at any future time this Parliament is called upon to legislate for that province in the matter of education the fault will lie with the province and not with the federal government or with this Parliament. Such legislation by Parliament will not be an encroachment upon the rights of the province. From the beginning of confederation it was contemplated that the minority should be protected. Sir Etienne Taché, who was president of the conference in Quebec in 1864, and who was afterwards premier of Canada spoke in this way—being premier of Canada he had authority to speak for the government and to declare the policy of that government and the meaning of its legislation. He said:

If the lower branch, of the legislature were insensate enough and wicked enough to commit some flagrant act of injustice (I desire to remark here that Sir E. Taché does not limit his declaration to acts within the constitution, he speaks of any act of injustice). If the lower branch of the legislature were insensate enough and wicked enough to commit some flagrant act of injustice against the English Protestant portion of the community, they would be checked by the general government. But the hon. gentleman argues that that would raise an issue between the local and the general governments.