

was not recognized? Let it be so. But, is an abuse a sound argument to support another abuse in another part of the country? Surely not. In the North-West Territories the rights of our compatriots and of the French Half-Breeds have already been recognized by our statutory law, which acknowledges English and French as the official languages of that part of Canada. Why then to-day deprive those people of a privilege, which they now enjoy?

Since this Bill has been put before Parliament, one thing has grieved me more than anything else; it is the fact of a majority of my own countrymen, in another part of these buildings, having given their assent, and let me add to the extent of assuming the responsibility of the adoption by that House of this hideous project of depriving their own countrymen of the privilege they now enjoy, that of reading the affairs of their section of the country in their own language, and of speaking, as a matter of right, their own mother tongue in their legislature. Had the French members of the Commons voted against the proposal of the Government, this clause which is now under discussion would never have been introduced. It is practically a proposal to repeal the present law, because the majority in the North-West have already expressed their determination to abolish the use of French, so that the project under discussion, giving to the majority of the Territories the constitutional right, which they do not now possess, to deal with this question, is, in fact, practically dealing with the question itself, and giving those people power to do what they have already tried to do, in violation of the constitution which we are asked to amend in that direction.

I should like to know from those representatives of Quebec how they would like to hear that the Imperial Parliament have amended the British North America Act, by giving to the Federal Parliament of Canada power to deal with this same question of language? If there is any patriotism in those men, no doubt they would grieve at such a course having been followed in England. They would consider such legislation as a determination of the Imperial authorities to deal unjustly with the minority in the Dominion and to set aside their solemn engagements. They would say that the

course followed was disloyal, as it undoubtedly would be. Is the course they have followed in this instance much better? Certainly not—I should say it is worse—much worse. It is well known that at different times, under the different constitutions granted to Canada, the use of French was not tolerated. But it is well known also that the Canadian Legislature, if not unanimously, at all events by a strong majority, composed of French and truly loyal English members desirous of treating fairly the French minority, have now and then voted addresses to the Crown asking that the French language should be recognized and made official. Can this be expected in the North-West, I say No; no. Was not the Lieutenant Governor of those Territories, some weeks ago, forced to disregard the constitutional law and read the speech at the opening of the Legislature in English only? Is not such conduct on the part of the majority of the people of the North-West sufficient evidence to prevent any patriotic man assuming the responsibility of giving that majority full power to deal as they think fit, with this important question of language?

I know of a gentleman, a ministerial member of the other House, who left his political friends in 1885, convinced that his leaders, the Government, did not deal equitably with the French minority of the Dominion. Three or four years after, the same member went back to his old friends, admitting, according to *Dame Rumeur*, that time seemed long to him on the left side of the House, that the influence of a member on that side was rather weak. No prospect of a situation. Nothing could be done for one's county—and so the keeping of a member's influence with his constituents was a hard case. I would not conclude from this case that the same reasons have kept together in the case of the present Bill, the majority of the members of my Province, but I certainly cannot otherwise explain how they can have dealt with this important question in the way they have done. It was currently rumored, some two or three days before the vote was taken, that the Quebec members were against any amendments to the present law in this direction. The vote on the Beausoleil motion shows conclusively that such were their opinions. It is true Sir John A. Macdonald called a caucus of his supporters