has taunted the Prime Minister for some opinions expressed by him in 1890, when this question was before parliament. The Prime Minister can defend himself; but my hon. friend should have done him the justice to quote the exact language which he used on that occasion. When this question was debated in 1890 he said, page 1014 of the 'Hansard':

> Let us remember this: That if we are prepared to stand by the principle of local autonomy in the Northwest Territories, we will stand ten times, and a hundred times, stronger when we have to meet an attack in our own province. If we are now prepared to stand by the principle of local autonomy, I submit that when the time comes we will find a tower of strength in the position which we may take upon this question. This is one of the reasons which impel me to take the action I propose on this measure, that is, to support the measure of the hon. Minister of Justice. I quite realize that it must be painful for many hon. members from the province of Quebec to vote for a measure which may perhaps imply the possibility that the French language should cease to be the official language in the Northwest Territories. I have no reason to suppose, and I do not for one moment suppose, that the people of the Northwest Territories would act unjustly or unfairly towards the French minority. I know it has been said that if we vote this measure it is a foregone conclusion that the French language will not be an official language of the Northwest, because the legislature has already expressed its opinion in favour of removing it as an official language. Well, that it true; but we must remember that at present there is not one single member speaking French in the legislature, and if, after the next election, there should be no change in the representation, if there should be no French representative in the Northwest Territories assembly, surely no one will complain if, under such circumstances, after the attention of the people has been aroused to the question the local legislature were to adhere to its present intention.

So the Prime Minister, when leader of the opposition, said that as there was no French Canadian representative sitting in the Northwest assembly, and as it was a question of local autonomy, the legislature had full power to do what it has since done. That was also the opinion of the highest constitutional authorities which were in parliament at that time. Now, Sir, the leader of the opposition of that day stated that if this question would come up before parliament he would have to consider the number of French inhabitants in the Northwest Territories. As I said a moment ago, it is a good thing to fight for our undoubted rights, but it is another thing to fight uselessly for special privileges. I challenge my hon. friends from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) and Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) to find, within the four corners of this constitution, anything guaranteeing the use of the French language in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. LEMIEUX.

Mr. BERGERON. We are not going to fight on words. Does not the hon. gentleman think that all that took place before Manitoba entered confederation, that all that was done at that time in favour of the French language and separate schools, in favour of the rights of the French Canadians and the half-breeds in that part of the country, was done on behalf of people who resided in that territory now comprised in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan?

Mr. LEMIEUX. Again I will quote to my hon. friend the language of the contracting parties. Here is the declaration of the people of Rupert's Land as I find it in clause 10:

> That the English and French languages be common in the legislature and courts, and that all public documents and Acts of the legislature be published in both languages.
>
> All the above articles have been severally discussed and adopted by the French and English representatives without a dissenting voice, as the conditions upon which the people of Rupert's Land enter confederation.

The people of Rupert's Land, these are not the people of the Northwest Territories to-day. But I will go further. Immediately after this had been submitted to Sir John Macdonald and Sir George E. Cartier, and the other ministers of the Crown, an Act was passed to create the province of Manitoba, containing exactly the same provisions. Three years after, the Northwest Territories are constituted, but not a word is mentioned about the French language. Will my hon. friend explain that to me?

Mr. A. LAVERGNE. Will the hon. gentleman allow me to ask him a question? Would not the federal parliament to-day have the right to establish the French language in the Northwest if it saw fit to do so?

Mr. LEMIEUX. Undoubtedly, and so can my hon. friend agitate the country and ask that the 200,000 French Canadians in the province of Ontario shall have the right to the official use of the French language in the legislature. But as there is not one word in the British North America Act about the use of the French language in Ontario, as there is no covenant or guarantee to that effect in previous documents, nobody would dare agitate for such a thing. Would not my hon. friend from Montmagny (Mr. A. Lavergne) be more practical, would not my hon. friends from Jacques Cartier and Beauharnois be more justified, in agitating the country and asking our English fellow citizens to grant the use of the French language in the legislature of Ontario, rather than asking the use of the French language in the legisla-