

for the purpose of establishing a school fund in aid of popular education for all time to come, it applied to all classes of people whether Roman Catholics or Protestants.

A Roman Catholic being part and parcel of the province had equal rights and privileges in these provinces, and no matter whether it was separate schools or non-denominational, or public schools, the funds were intended to be appropriated and paid in proportion to the population of each portion of each district, no matter of what creed or what race they were. That was really the intention at the time, and in setting apart so much of the land as was set apart at that time it was done for the purpose of perpetuating a fund for educational purposes in the Northwest, and with proper management they will have a school fund for the purposes of the education of present and future generations, unequalled in any part of the world, and every Canadian ought to be proud of the position taken by the government of the day in establishing such a fund. We do not find anywhere in this country any more of the agitations we have had in the past; but if we are to have speeches of the character delivered by the hon. Secretary of State, in the important position he holds as a Minister of the Crown, it is very likely to engender that which he pretends not to desire to exist or to perpetuate.

Hon. Mr. KERR—I wish to state my reason for not desiring to vote for the amendment of the hon. gentleman. These lands which were set apart, as we have heard, in 1872, for the purposes of education and for which provision was made later, in the year 1879, have now become the subject of a trust in connection with the two provinces. The conditions on which that trust is to be held are set forth in the Autonomy Act, and that Act describes beyond any question the manner in which the trust fund was to be distributed, leaving the provinces to make the distribution in accordance with the law. The words of the Autonomy Act are very definite. Subsection 2 of section 17, says:

2. In the appropriation by the legislature or distribution by the government of the province of any moneys for the support of schools organized and carried on in accordance with

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the said chapter 49 or any Act passed in amendment thereof, or in substitution thereof, there shall be no discrimination against schools of any class described in the said chapter 49.

There is a definite and well defined statement of the fact that this trust is one which is to be carried out by the province; the autonomy of the province is recognized, and under these circumstances I do not think it should be interfered with. The law, as it is proposed, is in accordance with that law and leaves it in exactly the same shape, because it says the moneys which are now to be realized from the sale of these lands shall be paid annually to the government of the province. They are made the distributing hand for the discharge of the trust within which such lands are situated; and for what purpose? Towards the support of schools. That does not define whether they are to be public or private or anything else. It is schools. If the schools are public schools, then it is schools. If it is schools at large, then we are to have schools at large; but we are not changing the position of schools organized and carried on in accordance with the law of such province, and the money so paid shall be distributed for the purpose of the support of schools organized and carried on in accordance with the law of that province: 'By the said government in such a manner as it deems expedient.' That enable the government to distribute the money as it is required. If it is a large school, and larger expenditure is required, the province can so apportion it, and the same with the smaller ones. They can give it on a fair basis to the schools which are to be maintained under the Autonomy Act. It seems to me that this is practically a transfer to the provinces of the money which is to go to the provinces to be distributed under the law as it is at present. It does not change in one iota, whereas the insertion of the word 'public' may be a change from what was intended either under the original arrangement or by the Autonomy Act. Under these circumstances, it seems to me that what we ought to do is to adhere strictly to the language of the Bill as we have it. The only interpretation we can put upon