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may come when they will not be powerful enough to resist the pressure of the newcomers into that country, men that have perhaps no interest in the unity of Canada, who are not attached to the soil of Canada, who have had no part in the past history of Canada, and who, therefore, by numerical strength, may try to force some obnoxious legislation on the government of these Territories. I say, therefore, that for the protection of the Northwest, for the protection of the present representatives of the Northwest, for the protection of the statesmanship of the men who are now at the head of affairs there, it was good policy on the part of the government to retain the control and administration of the public lands in the Northwest.

Now, coming to the question that has occupied the field of discussion for the last month, I may say that I intend to discuss it from a threefold point of view: from the constitutional point of view, from the religious point of view and from the national point of view. In doing so I shall, as it is my custom, express frankly and clearly what I believe to be true, and in doing so I hope that I shall not offend any man in this House, because every man who is attached to his convictions will understand that in this free parliament of ours every true conviction should be frankly and sincerely expressed. I may say at once that if there is a regrettable feature in all this discussion, it is not that passions have been aroused, it is not that prejudices have been raised. I entirely agree with the Prime Minister when he says that many of the passions that are now aroused spring from one of the noblest feelings in humanity, they come from an exaggeration, or from a perversion, of that which constitutes the most stable basis of a nation, namely, attachment to religious creed and attachment to national feeling. The men who are committing a crime against this nation are those who, having opinions of their own, are trying to shelter themselves under a constitutional pretense. The great argument which is being used by the opponents of this measure is, I may say, the shibboleth of provincial rights. Now, Sir, there is no man in this parliament who is more attached to provincial rights than I am. I am the descendant of a race that has claimed provincial rights for many years, and just because I am a sincere adherent of provincial rights, I say that if provincial rights are going to be maintained in this country, they cannot be maintained on any sham basis, they can only be maintained on a basis of equal justice to every part of our population and every section, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. What are provincial rights as they relate to the school question? I am not going into an acute analysis of every word and every letter in the text of the law, though I am not afraid to take up the study of the constitutional question with any man. But I think that once in a while when lawyers get into a

muddle about small points of law, sometimes a cool and common sense outsider may throw a little light upon common truths that are too much forgotten by lawyers.

A few days ago the Prime Minister gave to this House a short history of one clause contained in our national constitution, that clause relating to school matters. But to my mind, if I may be permitted to say so, when a motion was made in this House in 1893 by the late Minister of Public Works, then the member for L'Islet, the Prime Minister gave a still clearer and more complete history of the educational policy of Canada, he gave us the true origin of clause 93 of the British North America Act. What was that origin? That although for a century the Protestant minority in the province of Quebec had been treated, not only in the most just, but also in the most generous manner, still that minority was averse to joining the confederation compact unless their privileges and rights in the province of Quebec were made absolutely secure. Thereupon it was proposed that the same measure of guarantee which was asked by the Protestant minority of Quebec should be given to the Catholic minority in the province of Ontario and the other provinces. Now, Sir, I am bound to say that there was at that time something of the same feeling that exists now, but that feeling was frank enough not to take refuge in legal quibbles. It was stated then, as it is now outside of this parliament, that there should be one rule of justice for the Catholics and another rule of justice for Protestants; that there should not be one law for both the Catholics and Protestants, but that the Catholics should have one law requiring them to respect the Protestant rights in the province of Quebec, while in the province of Ontario the Catholics should rely upon the generosity of the majority. Indeed, the Hon. A. T. Galt, then the accredited representative of the Protestant minority in Quebec, went to England to secure the adoption of clause 93. Now, eminent legal men in this House, eminent jurists, have tried to make out a case that this clause 93 in the British North America Act should be cut in two, and that wherever a Protestant province outside of Ontario is concerned you should read only the first paragraph of it, thereby giving an absolute freedom to the majority to do whatever they like. I will not give you my own authority, I will not give you the authority of any man of my creed and nationality in opposing the proposition laid down by the leader of the opposition and by Mr. Hanilton; I will go to the highest authority in this empire to prove that this argument is but a sham pretense, because the opposition in this parliament is afraid on the one hand to grant justice to the minority in the west and is afraid on the other hand to state it frankly before the people of Quebec.

When the British North America Act was presented to the British parliament, Lord