

the imperial authorities. In 1875, the Act organizing the Northwest Territories was passed; but you will notice that in that Act, there is not a line concerning the use of the French language in the legislature of the Territories or in the courts. It was only in 1877, in a Bill introduced by the late Hon. Mr. Mills, and moved in the Senate by the Hon. Mr. Scott, the present Secretary of State, that a clause was inserted on that subject upon an amendment moved I think, by the late Senator Girard. That clause, which appears as clause 11 in the Act of 1877 and clause 110 in the Revised Statutes, reads as follows :

Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the said council and in the proceedings before the courts, and both these languages shall be used in the records and journals of the said council, and the ordinances of the said council shall be printed in both these languages.

At that time there was a comparatively large French Canadian element in the Northwest Territories. That Act passed the House of Commons and became the law of the Northwest Territories, and remained so until 1890. The House is aware of the agitation which took place as a result of the campaign led by the late Mr. Dalton McCarthy. Mr. McCarthy advocated the abolition of the separate schools system, and the abolition of the French language in the Northwest Territories and in the Manitoba legislature. The older members of this House are conversant with the Bill which was introduced during the memorable session of 1890 by Mr. Dalton McCarthy. In the preamble of that Bill Mr. McCarthy declared that it was essential to the welfare of the country that there should be one language only; but the enacting clause only proposed to abolish the use of the French language in the Northwest assembly. I may say that a few months or perhaps a year before, the Northwest assembly had practically unanimously decided to expunge the French language from its records and its deliberations. The Bill of Mr. McCarthy was of a very radical nature, especially the preamble, which conveyed the idea that if it were passed by the House of Commons of Canada, it meant that not only in the Northwest Territories the French language be abolished, but that it would be the signal of a campaign against the use of that language in this parliament and even in the province of Quebec. In fact, Mr. McCarthy and several other gentlemen made a very bitter campaign against the separate school system and the dual language. What happened then? The Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. McCarthy. Our late colleague (Mr. Davin) who represented the constituency of Assiniboia and who at that time, when the Northwest was represented, I think, only by two or three members, was the spokesman of his fellow members, moved an amendment to the effect that this House should not pronounce

on the use of the French language in the Northwest Territories, but that the legislature be authorized to deal alone with that question. The words of his amendment were:

That the said Bill be not now read a second time, but that it be resolved that it is expedient that the legislative assembly of the Northwest Territories be authorized to deal with the subject matter of this Bill by ordinance or enactment after the next general election for the said province.

That was Mr. Davin's amendment. Mr. Beausoleil's sub-amendment was :

That all the words after the word 'resolved' in the amendment be struck out and the following be inserted instead thereof :

That the official use of the French and English languages in the legislature and the courts of the Northwest Territories, was established by this parliament in the well understood interests of the people of the said Territories, in order to promote the good understanding and the harmony that should exist between the different races, and with a view, by a liberal policy, to promote the colonization and settlement of those vast domains; that nothing has happened since to excuse or justify the withdrawal of the privilege granted only a few years ago; that the result of the proposed legislation would be to create uneasiness and discontent throughout the Dominion and to put in doubt the stability of our institutions, and hereby to hinder and delay for a long time the development of the immense resources of the Canadian Northwest.

I may say that only one French Canadian member voted against Mr. Beausoleil's sub-amendment; that was the late Sir Adolphe Chapleau, then Secretary of State. The debate went on and Sir John Macdonald delivered probably the most remarkable speech of the latter part of his career. He appealed to the leader of the opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) he appealed to Mr. Blake, who was a member of the House, and he asked especially Mr. Blake to join hands with his Minister of Justice, Sir John Thompson in framing an amendment which would embody the sentiments, the aspirations, and the opinions of all those who sat in the House of Commons. To that effect the following amendment was moved, replacing the amendment of Mr. Davin :

That this House, having regard to the long continued use of the French language in old Canada, and to the covenants on that subject embodied in the British North America Act cannot agree to the declaration contained in the said Bill as the basis thereof, that it is expedient in the interest of the national unity of the Dominion that there should be community of language amongst the people of Canada ;

That, on the contrary, this House declares its adherence to the said covenants and its determination to resist any attempt to impair the same ;

That, at the same time, this House deems it expedient and proper and not inconsistent with those covenants that the legislative assembly