

the Province of Quebec who accepted that position; they disregarded the interests of those whom in honor and in conscience they were bound to protect. If the Government are allowed to sanction this invasion of the rights of the minority in the North-West Territories they will be placed in a position to go still further and to sanction the Act recently passed by the Manitoba Legislature abolishing the use of French as an official language in that Province. Sir John Macdonald is bound by his assertions, and by his interpretations of the Constitution for over twenty years, to veto that Act of the Manitoba Legislature; but the decision of the other House on the dual language question would warrant the Prime Minister in allowing the Act, because the Parliament of Canada has already consented to doing away with the use of the French language in the North West. The result of passing this Bill without amendment will be that within a year, both in the Territories and in the Province of Manitoba, the rights guaranteed to the minority will be swept away. It is true that the great majority of the people in that part of Canada do not approve of the use of the French language, but the French population are not new arrivals there. French was the first language spoken in those Territories, and it is not surprising that those who are of French descent cling to it still. In this country England did not adopt the same policy that she pursued in Ireland. When England sought to destroy, not only the nationality but the religion of Ireland, she attacked the language of the people.

**HON. MR. POWER**—But the religion of the Irish was not destroyed.

**HON. MR. BELLEROSE**—England tried it, but did not succeed. In this country her policy was different. She was liberal in the extreme to her French Canadian subjects. Of her own free will she gave them the rights that they have enjoyed, and guaranteed them by treaty. These privileges were confirmed by the British North America Act, and when the Territorial Government was organized in the North-West the Dominion Government—and I am happy to say it was a Liberal Government—extended the same privileges to that portion of the Dominion. Are we to be told now, after all these years, that

these privileges are to be withdrawn? It is useless to say that we are simply granting to the people of the Territories the right to regulate these matters for themselves: we know what it means—that we are handing over the minority to be stripped of their rights by a hostile majority. We are asked to empower the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories to strike a blow which the Government at Ottawa have not dared themselves to inflict. I should have looked on this question in a different light had the Dominion Government come forward and adopted this policy on their own responsibility, but they have preferred to deprive the minority in the North-West Territories of their privileges by indirect means, and it only shows that they are willing to empower others to do a wrong which they would have done themselves if they had not been afraid of the consequences. I would prefer the open hostility of the Government; and if those who speak the French language throughout the Dominion are true to themselves they will resent this as an act of hostility to their race on the part of the Government of the day. I am opposed to this Bill, and when it goes to a Committee of the Whole House I shall move an amendment to that clause.

**HON. MR. KAULBACH**—This only refers to the proceedings in the Assembly. The publication of the statutes and the proceedings of the courts are not given to the Government of the North-West, and, therefore, the clause is not as far-reaching in its effects as the hon. gentleman supposes.

The motion was agreed to.

## GRANTS OF PUBLIC LANDS BILL.

### SECOND READING

**HON. MR. ABBOTT** moved the second reading of Bill (W) "An Act respecting Grants of Public Lands." He said: This is a short Bill for the purpose of placing the titles of real estate in the North-West Territories upon a proper footing. It appears that we have adopted there the new system of titles, under which, on the death of a man, his real property vests in his executors. My hon. friend from Calgary will be able to correct me if I am wrong; it is a subject with which I am not familiar, but I understand it is neces-