

He says :

Before closing, I would say a word or two as to what we are seeking. As it has been already remarked, we are not asking for any declaration as to the extent of the relief to be given by the Governor General. We merely ask that it should be held that he has jurisdiction to hear our prayer, and to grant us some relief if he thinks proper to do so. It may be that the Dominion authorities may not choose to re-establish us in all the rights and privileges that we enjoyed prior to this Act of 1890.

You will see that, in the appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the counsel for the Roman Catholic minority contended there that the Dominion authorities might only grant a portion or they might grant the whole. If they were entitled to grant only a portion and not the whole, therefore they might consider it advisable not to grant any at all. That is the position in which the matter stands before the Parliament of Canada to-day. The matter will be in the hands of Parliament after the province of Manitoba has notified the Dominion Government as to what stand they will take in regard to it. So far as we are able to ascertain from public opinion in Manitoba, the disposition was not to accept any interference from the Dominion authority in regard to the provincial legislation enacted in 1890. But that whatever legislation was necessary, whatever the rights were, it was merely an agreement between the Dominion Government and the people who existed in Manitoba in 1870. However, I am not in the confidence of the government of Manitoba, and we will see what action they will take when the legislature meets again next month. I will read another extract from this blue-book. The Lord Chancellor says with regard to the Governor General :

He cannot do anything himself. And the last resort the only person or body who can do anything more are the Parliament of Canada, who are certainly not under legal compulsion to act and certainly would not act unless they conceived there was some substantial ground for it.

You see the Lord Chancellor, Lord Watson, the Lords of the Council generally have shown the constitutional power of Parliament is preserved in all its principles, that if a change of mind should come over the Canadian people in their policy as laid down 20 or 25 years ago, that so far as the Parliament of Canada is concerned it is at perfect liberty to take some other course if they think it desirable in the public interest to

do so. I say that it is desirable in the interests of the good government of Canada that we should preserve the constitutional liberties not only of the Dominion Parliament, but of the legislatures of the various provinces as clearly and as closely as we possibly can, that we should expand them rather than contract them. The principle that is in the minds of some of the people of Canada to-day is that under remedial legislation these liberties should be contracted rather than expanded. I raise my voice on behalf of the good government of this country. Canada is being governed on the sound basis of self-government, not as Russia is governed, by an autocratic. This is a democratic country under the democratic influence of the British constitution, the most enlightened, I may say in history, under a limited monarchy, which is subject to the constitutional power of Parliament, that that constitutional liberty is greater than is known in any country in the world. We must not impair that constitution in any degree, abridge any liberty that it confers on the people of Canada. Therefore, I think this is not an ordinary case which is now before the people. We are asked to establish a precedent in one direction or another which will influence the future of this country for all time in an injurious or a beneficial way. At page 266 of this book, Mr. Blake concludes his argument before the Lords of the Privy Council as follows :

What we ask your Lordships is, what the privileges were and how far they have been infringed; and then we propose to ask the Governor General to determine how far he will go. I do not ask your Lordships to make any suggestion as to his action, which I conceive from the beginning is political. He is to be instructed as to the law; and then his action and the action of the Parliament will carry the thing out.

I have quoted Mr. Blake, who was the leading counsel for the appellants. I have quoted Mr. Ewart, who was also counsel for the appellants. I have quoted also the idea that passed through the minds of the Judicial Committee themselves as they were impressed from day to day by the arguments brought before them. All those go to show to you that the action of the Parliament now is a political action and not in any sense a judicial action—that both under the British North America Act and the Manitoba Act the right of any minority is merely the right to appeal to Parliament, and