

" Heretofore the North-West Territory east and west of Manitoba has been governed by the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba and a species of half advisory, half legislative council of gentlemen chosen from among the residents in Winnipeg and its vicinity. They are themselves not slow to admit that their constitution is a farce, and it requires no effort of imagination in those even who have never been in the North-West to understand the impossibility of merchants and others in Winnipeg acting as a Legislature for the settlements on the Saskatchewan, and nearly a thousand miles away in the neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains. At one of the last sittings of this Winnipeg Council of which the former editor of the *Nouveau Monde* is a prominent member it was proposed to incorporate the clergy of the missionary dioceses of the North-West with land holding powers. The object of this was so apparent to those in Winnipeg who have seen the effect of the system there, that it was strenuously opposed by some of the English members, but in spite of their efforts it was carried, and would have come to Ottawa with such force as this nondescript council have been able to give to their legislation, had not Lieutenant Governor Morris refused to assent to the Bill."

We have several times in this Parliament incorporated ecclesiastical communities without objection from hon. gentlemen opposite, and have given them the right to hold real estate in the North-West; and this is the crime which is charged on the North-West Council, and which is put forth as the principal reason why it should be abolished. Under the new constitution the seat of the Government was removed to Fort Pelly, in the Territories. The council was composed of five members nominated by the Crown, including the two stipendiary magistrates, *ex officio*. The jurisdiction of the council extended over taxation for local and municipal purposes, property and civil rights, the administration of justice, including the organisation and maintenance of the courts of justice; education, with separate schools if desired by any minority; public health, licensing of inns, landmarks and boundaries, game and wild animals, and the care and protection thereof; roads and highways, the protection of timber, gaols, &c., and generally all matters of a merely local or private nature. Nearly all the powers of Local Legislatures of the old Provinces were thus given to this North-West Council; and to give a representative character to this body the Act provides that any district not exceeding an area of one thousand square miles is entitled to be erected into an electoral district, and to elect a member to the council for its first one thousand inhabitants of adult age, exclusive of aliens and Indians, and to two members for two thousand inhabitants. When the number of elected members shall reach twenty-one, the Act provides that the council shall become *ipso facto* the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories, having not only all the powers of the council, but also all the powers of a Legislative Assembly of the old Provinces, which the Governor in Council in Ottawa might