

The late Minister of the Interior said: 'I am bound to say that the draftsman was most unfortunate when he used the language embodied in this clause to provide for the right he professed that he desired to give.' But the Minister of Justice, in his explanation said: 'When this federal parliament was giving to Manitoba a constitution, it did not succeed in giving the minority the rights which it said it intended to give, and I was bound to make no mistake in this case, but to use the language that would clearly confer the rights we intended to give, and we intended to give the minority the rights as to separate schools which were contained in the Act of 1875.' But the Prime Minister said: 'We intended to do nothing but to perpetuate what exists to-day.' The Minister of Finance contends that what exists to-day is not what existed in 1875—that what existed in 1875 were separate schools similar to those in Ontario and Quebec; but what the Northwest minority have to-day are not separate schools at all, but only public schools. The Minister of Customs took the same ground. So that it seems to me that these hon. gentlemen are not consistent with themselves, and their speeches do not hang together when analysed. Now, I come to the member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa). He says that Mr. Blake, Mr. Mackenzie, the Honourable George Brown, and others, intended to, and did to all intents and purposes, settle what would be the educational system of that country for all time.

Mr. BOURASSA. If the hon. gentleman will allow me, I did not quote George Brown. I quoted Mr. Blake, Mr. Scott, Sir Alexander Campbell, and Mr. Mackenzie.

Mr. SPROULE. Did not the hon. member say that the Honourable George Brown in his speech declared that if that law were passed in that form it would remain for all time?

Mr. BOURASSA. No, the Prime Minister said that.

Mr. SPROULE. If the hon. member looks up 'Hansard' to-morrow, he will find that he said it.

Mr. BOURASSA. I may have said it, because it is true.

Mr. SPROULE. Well, what did that mean? It meant that they were making a constitution for what might afterwards become provinces. What does the British North America Act provide? It provides what shall be the constitution of provinces after they come into confederation or after they are established as provinces of the confederation. What was the confederation of Canada for? It gave a constitution which provided what rights the provinces should enjoy; the same rights were laid down for all; and it was intended that among the rights the provinces should enjoy

was the right to deal exclusively with education, with the exception of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The Prime Minister, when quoting the British North America Act to-night, said that in the list of subjects assigned to the provinces, there was a division between what might be regarded as the subjects over which they had absolute control and the subjects over which they had not absolute control; but I find that in the original resolutions on which the Confederation Act was based there was no such division whatever. It was clause 43 and the rights run from 1 to 18. They are direct taxation; borrowing powers; the establishment and tenure of provincial offices; agriculture; immigration; and then there is the clause giving the right to make laws in relation to education having regard to the rights and privileges which the Protestant or Catholic minorities in both the Canadas may possess as to their denominational schools at the time when the union comes into operation. That is all. There is nothing there to indicate any intention to bring all the province under the same right. But I want to draw attention to another point. When it was proposed to take home these resolutions and get an imperial enactment, the government declared that they would bring back nothing but an Act strictly upon the lines of these resolutions. I have here a motion that was made by the Hon. Mr. Holton. What was it? It was that the imperial Act should not become law until it would be submitted to the parliament of Canada and obtained the consent of that parliament. What reason did he give in support of his motion? He said he made his motion because of our experience in 1854, when we got an imperial Act giving us a constitution which contained clauses it was never intended should be in it. In answer to that resolution, the Attorney General of that day, the late Sir George Etienne Cartier, guaranteed on behalf of the government that they would bring back nothing but an imperial Act strictly based upon these resolutions. He said:

Mr. Speaker, in reply to what the hon. member for Hochelaga (Mr. Holton) has just said, I would merely tell the hon. members of this House that they need not become alarmed at the apprehensions and predictions of the hon. gentleman. I have already declared in my own behalf and on behalf of the government that the delegates who go to England will accept from the imperial parliament no Act but one based on the resolutions adopted by this House, and they will not bring back any other. I have pledged my word of honour on that point, and the word of honour of the government, and I trust that these will have at least as much weight with this House and the country as the apprehensions of the hon. member for Hochelaga (Mr. Holton).

I have just read the resolutions making no distinction with regard to the subjects which were to be assigned exclusively to