

was controlled by and which always elected my hon. friend the member for Brandon when he was able to bring those wonderful powers which he possessed to bear upon the electorate, he was able to secure a majority of 200 or 300. To-day, after that power has been withdrawn, the same people who elected him were good enough to elect me by a majority of a little over 500. Knowing, as I do what these same people think on this great question, I feel it my duty to trespass upon the time of the House for a short while.

Now, Mr. Speaker, although I am new in this parliament, I am not very new in the matter of years, and I am not very new in my knowledge of the political aspect of this country and of my friends who sit on the other side of the House. Living so near as I do to the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton), we became to some extent at least chums—I do not know if that is a parliamentary expression, but it is at all events a somewhat endearing term. I do not suppose the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sifton) wants my sympathy, but I cannot help being a little sensitive for him and I feel very deeply the manner in which he was treated in connection with this Bill. Some time ago, when we asked the First Minister as to when the member for Brandon might be expected back, we were told he was in the south for his health. Soon after that Bill was introduced, and from a health point of view it was very unfair to compel the Minister of the Interior to make such a break neck journey to Ottawa, and after getting here to force him to rush out on the street to ascertain what were the contents of the Autonomy Bill which had been introduced to parliament. The Prime Minister told us to-day that the member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) had asked for three weeks' delay between the first and second readings of this Bill, but hon. gentleman will remember with what derisive cheers from the government supporters that request of the member for East Grey was met at the time. The three weeks asked for by the member for Grey have passed and although this House of Commons has not been very busy, we are still waiting for the second reading. To-day the honoured leader of the opposition endeavoured to get some information from the premier as to when the second reading would be moved, and when that request was made a gentleman on the Liberal benches remarked: You will know soon. Well, I for one, would like to know how long that 'soon' is. We have the information now that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sifton) was not consulted as to this Bill, that the Minister of Finance was not consulted either, and that Mr. Haultain, the Prime Minister of the Territories was not consulted as to the educational clauses. The Prime Minister tried to make out that Mr. Haultain had been consulted, but I have too much confidence in the ability of

the right hon. gentleman to think that he for one moment thought that he was making the House believe any such thing. So far as we know at present, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Haultain and the members of parliament from the Northwest Territories were not consulted on this matter. Right here I would like to say that this afternoon during the discussion of this great question, not one member from the Northwest Territories supporting the government was in his place in the House. I do not know all these members and that statement may not be correct, but I am told that it is a fact. Any way, whether they were here or not they were absolutely silent on the question and I suppose the inference is they are satisfied with what has occurred. I have not such a deep interest in the other members of the government as I have in the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) and therefore I am not so concerned in the fact that the others were not consulted about this matter, but I really do feel chagrined that the Minister of the Interior should have been so slighted. There are other gentlemen in the cabinet, who, if they were consulted must have experienced an extraordinary conversion from their views if they gave their consent to such a measure as that now before the House. In 1896, when the Manitoba school question was before parliament, the present Minister of Militia (Sir Frederick Borden) said:

This measure proposes to make use of the powers of this House as has never been attempted since confederation, namely, to interfere, to amend, to supplement, to change the legislation of a province with reference to a subject over which the provinces have exclusive control under our federal system of government.

Even if I rested my case there, that is pretty strong language from the Minister of Militia and we have no reason to think that his views have changed since. How did it come that he gave his consent, or was it that he was not thought of when the consulting was going on. Sir Wilfrid Laurier (then Mr. Laurier, leader of the opposition) used this language:

But the hon. gentleman knows that the bitterness of the initiation of confederation, the feeling against the coercion then practised has never been removed, and never will entirely disappear until it is buried in the grave of the last man of that generation whose manhood was outraged by the arbitrary proceeding which trampled under foot the dignity and manhood of a proud people.

That reference to coercion was intended by Mr. Laurier for Sir Charles Tupper in relation to his efforts to bring Nova Scotia into confederation, but I am old enough to remember some things which were said and done by members of the present govern-