

district is concerned, if the result in former years is any indication, the school question will not figure there at all. Indeed I fancy that generally throughout the west very few votes will turn on this question. It is the people of Ontario down here who are agitating; the people who are nearer the field of action are not agitated at all. It is something like what happened at the time of the Northwest rebellion. Down here in Ontario and in the eastern provinces, the people thought we were all being murdered, and the people of the locality I lived in at that time had the same idea. I went out west with some of the boys, leaving my wife at home, and when we got amongst the Indians I telegraphed her to come west because there was less trouble there than there was in Neepawa.

Mr. SPROULE. Might I ask the hon. gentleman, what significance or importance he attaches to the hundreds of signers of petitions which I sent him from his own riding, protesting against this legislation? Does he think that these petitions were signed out of mere idle curiosity?

Mr. CRAWFORD. I may say to my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) that the Orangemen there are nearly all Conservatives, at all events a large majority of them are; a few vote Liberal, a few voted for me. Therefore I say to my hon. friend that nearly every man of them, if he thought it would hurt the Liberal party would sign these petitions and send them in here as quickly as they possibly could; they would sign not considering the question or the issue at all, but just as a pure matter of party and not principle.

Mr. SPROULE. As an Orangeman, I want to ask him this, and I ask him as a brother—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. SPROULE. It seems to be a matter of amusement for some hon. gentlemen, but I am asking a direct and pertinent question. Is the hon. gentleman aware of a circular ever having been sent to the Orangemen of Canada for any political purpose? If he is I have never known of it.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I am not aware of it and I am not saying that there was, but I am saying—

Mr. SPROULE. The insinuation is that this was sent for that purpose.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Well, if you want to take that insinuation out of it you can do so, but I was not making any insinuation. I was stating what I believed to be a fact, that if my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) did so it would be accepted in that way and not for any strong reasons affecting the question itself, but as a matter of politics. This Orange resolution states further:

Mr. CRAWFORD.

Therefore, the mandate of 1896 is the final expression of the public mind of the school question. It was clear and emphatic and understood by the government of the day, which is still the government of the Dominion. This right worshipful grand lodge respectfully directs the attention of the government to the verdict of the people in 1896, and urges a compliance with their will upon this great question. The complete separation of church and state is a principle for which our fathers contended many years ago.

I read this resolution for the purpose of showing the members of this House and the people of Canada, that a great majority of those who have taken an interest in this matter outside this House seem to have as their whole object and aim to create an impression different altogether from the actual state of affairs. The whole idea of this resolution by the Orange society is that the church and state is being connected in some way, but there is no evidence whatever of that.

There is no connection, so far as the school legislation is concerned, between church and state. That is a vital point, and when the people of Canada come to understand it and see it in that light, they will accept it, and say that we have done well. In this connection, I wish to read a portion of an article which appeared in the Toronto 'Globe':

If it be a Protestant separate school attended also by Roman Catholic children, the latter are entitled at half-past three to withdraw from the school if their parents or guardians so desire it. If it be a Roman Catholic separate school, the Protestant children at half-past three are in like manner entitled to withdraw, and thus for one-half hour after school closing religious instruction may be given in the school building. This class of school being wholly under state control is really misnamed a separate school, for during school hours it differs in no respect from a public school. A more correct designation would be to call this class of school a Protestant public school or a Roman Catholic public school rather than a separate school, there being nothing in its administration to prevent the youth of all denominations attending any one of these classes of schools.

Now, there is no question in my mind but that the church is entirely without control over the schools except from half-past three to four o'clock. Were it otherwise, I would not be prepared to support the provision. The reason I accept the provision in the Bill as amended is that it is clear and definite, and we know exactly what we are getting. That is the advantage of the amended Bill over the other. The other was not clear, in my opinion; but this Bill is clear, and it establishes in the new provinces about to be formed a system of schools which is in fact superior to any other system of schools in Canada at the present time, and admitted to be so by our friends on the other side of the House.