

have not the courage to come out and say what they mean, they are hiding behind the rock of the constitution, so that when an election comes on they can go into the province of Quebec and say: We voted against the government because the government was not going far enough, was not giving you the separate schools you were entitled to under the constitution; then they can go into the province of Ontario and say: We voted against the government because we wanted to leave the new provinces the power to do what they pleased, as the member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) said the other day, so that they may wipe out the last vestige of the rights given under the Act of 1875. That is what I object to—these hon. gentlemen have not the courage to come out openly and say what they mean. We, on this side of the House, say what we propose to do, and if we are doing wrong we can be punished for it. But hon. gentlemen opposite don't want to take that position, they want to hide behind the constitution.

Mr. SPROULE. What did his leader say about standing on the constitution? What was he hiding behind?

Mr. TURRIFF. Yes, my leader said he was standing on the constitution, the leader of the hon. gentleman said he was standing on the constitution, while the hon. member for Jacques Cartier said the constitution was altogether a different thing from what his leader had described it. Mr. Haultain says the constitution means something else; and our friends opposite quote Mr. Christopher Robinson's opinion which shows a still further difference. Now, I do not pretend to know anything about constitutional law, and the only difference between myself and the great lawyers on the other side of the House is that while I do not know anything about constitutional law, I am well aware of the fact. Now, Sir, there has not been a single word said by hon. gentlemen opposite about separate schools in the Northwest since this discussion started, and I propose to say something about them. I know what they have been for a long time back. Over twenty years ago I was a member of the Territorial legislature when the first school ordinance was passed in 1884, passed under the Northwest Territories Act of 1875. Previously to 1892 we had a system of separate schools, the same kind of schools they had in the province of Manitoba. Those schools were not satisfactory; everybody knows that; they were not even satisfactory to our Roman Catholic friends and ratepayers. They were not satisfied with the class of schools given them, and were as anxious to have them changed as anybody else. In the year 1892 the local legislature, under Mr. Haultain, changed the old system, and from that year up to the present day there has not been one word of protest heard against the schools from the people of the Northwest Territories,

Mr. TURRIFF

no protest has been made either to the local legislature or to this government. If that school system had not been satisfactory, do you think, Mr. Speaker, there would not have been an agitation? Don't you think the Northwest people would have been appealing to this House? The people of the Northwest are accustomed at all times to kick vigorously when they think that things are not right.

The people of the Northwest Territories are accustomed to kick very vigorously to the Northwest legislature if things are not right, and I want to say again that since 1892, since the present law was passed, there has never been a word of complaint from Protestants or Catholics or from the Northwest government in any shape or form, or any statement that the law was not a good one. I say that the law as it exists in the Northwest Territories to-day—and it is the only law that we are putting in force—is the most satisfactory law that you can get, because we have proof of it in the fact that it has been in force for thirteen years without ever a complaint having been made. What does that law give them? As the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) stated the other day, if church schools were what were given to the Roman Catholics in the Northwest Territories by the Act of 1875, there is only a small vestige of them left, and for this reason: That the separate Catholic school in the Northwest, or the public Catholic school—it does not matter much which—is to all intents and purposes a public school. It is exactly the same as a public school. The teachers of the Roman Catholic separate school must attend the same normal school and get the same certificates exactly as the teachers in the public schools. The school has to be inspected before any grant can be paid, by a public school inspector. The only difference is that in the first and second readers the text is a little different, but even these books have to be authorized by the Minister of Education. There is no church or clerical control in any shape, form or manner over the Catholic separate schools of the Northwest Territories to-day. They are all under the control of the local legislature, every one of them, and the only difference—and it is not much of a difference either, because the public schools have the same right if they choose to use it—is that between half-past three o'clock in the afternoon and four, they may impart religious instruction. Now, I am going to ask in this Canada of ours, in this British colony, in this country that is supposed to take its institutions from our mother country, from that mother country where they are liberal and broad-minded, if there is a Protestant amongst us who would say that he would do away with the right of our Roman Catholic friends in their own schools to teach their children and