

that you could leave out the whole of section 16 and the result would be that section 93 of the British North America Act would apply, and the power of the province to deal with the question of schools would be absolute. It is so in the provinces of British Columbia and Prince Edward Island. In the constitutions of these provinces there is not a word about education or separate schools, and therefore, according to the argument of these hon. gentlemen, the logical conclusion would be that these provinces could not deal with education at all. That is where their argument would land them. Now, what does it all mean? It means simply this—and everybody of common sense can see it—that if the Dominion parliament, in constituting a province, does not deal with the question of education, then the question can be dealt with by the province. Nobody can get away from that conclusion with the intelligent electorate of any province of this Dominion. They will say: Why did you not, as a government of the Dominion, leave that matter in the hands of these new provinces as you did all other local questions, giving them provincial autonomy in every respect? Is the case for separate schools in those provinces good or not? If I were going to-morrow to live in the province of Alberta, and made up my mind that I wanted separate schools there, I would condemn the leader of this government for the manner in which he brought this question into this House and spoiled my chance of getting them. If he is honestly in favour of separate schools, and is not simply playing the game of politics, if he is really sincere in his appeals to keep racial and religious questions out of this House, why does he bring them in? If this Bill were passed without section 16, everybody knows that the provinces would have the power to deal with education, and this question would not have been brought into this House. Does the premier understand that the new provinces are not going to give separate schools? Then, if he thinks they are wrong on that question he should not give them autonomy. But if he thinks the provinces have a right to decide the question, then he should leave clause 16 out of the Bill, because they have the power without mentioning it in the Bill. Does he think, on the merits of the question, having in view the future welfare of those provinces, that the majority will not be in favour of separate schools? If he thinks they have no right to that opinion, then, as an honest man, he should say, I will not give them autonomy for ten years yet, because I do not think they are sufficiently educated to deal with the subject of education. But that is not his position. He knows that the people of the Northwest are entitled to autonomy, and he practically says, I am afraid that in exercising their right they will or may not

Mr. LANCASTER.

establish separate schools, and, therefore, I will not leave them free to decide the question. No sensible man, applying his common sense to this question as would a jury, no matter how he votes, can easily feel in his heart of hearts that the premier really wants separate schools out there peaceably or else he would leave the provinces to deal with the question. I am not saying that I would or would not be in favour of separate schools if I lived in the province of Alberta. Without living there for two or three years I could not say whether I would be in favour of them or not. For that same reason I ought not to be asked to vote upon this question; for that same reason the supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite ought not to be asked to vote upon this question; for that same reason the premier ought not to have brought this question into the House; for that same reason every man of us, whether he is in favour of separate schools or not, ought to vote against the Bill. It is a matter entirely of local concern which you are only in a position to decide after you have lived out there and understand all the conditions. You do not want to take newspaper reports, letters from friends, sketches or literature of any kind; you have actually to live in a community before you know how to deal with the educational system in that community. It may be that if I lived in Alberta two or three years, I would be a strong advocate of separate schools there, or it may be that I would think separate schools were not good things for that province; but for that very reason every hon. member of this House should vote against this Bill, except perhaps the premier, who introduced it, and who, perhaps as a matter of consistency, should stick to it.

The hon. Postmaster General, in the course of his remarks, said that if you trace the history of the constitutions of other provinces and the various changes in them, you will find that no two of them are exactly alike, and he instanced the divorce courts which he seemed to think were a wonderful instance of that fact. But he gave the whole thing away by saying that it was because the provinces with divorce courts had established them before those provinces came into the union. Although the British North America Act assigned divorce to the Dominion, yet it provided that those provinces should continue to have them. That is the constitution, and therefore there is no straining of the constitution in that provision. Yet here is the Postmaster General, a self-styled statesman, objecting to this being done on legal grounds. If I did not know otherwise, I might suppose that the Postmaster General had never been near a law office or had never seen a statute. I am told that he is a lawyer, though he does not want to be called a lawyer, and I understand why. Because lawyers are men of