

paratively nothing in this legislation and therefore he could vote for it. It also satisfied my hon. friend the Minister of Finance; because there was more than a mere rumour around the corridors of this House that the Minister of Finance was not altogether satisfied with the Bill when he returned, and those rumours did not cease until after the First Minister had brought down the proposed amendments, upon which I suppose it is intended to call upon us to vote when we come to clause 16. But we are practically at clause 16, because clause 2 of the Bill stands over for the express purpose of being considered with clause 16. That was the request of the Minister of Justice yesterday and also to-day, I believe. Therefore is it possible that the Minister of Justice has been discussing clause 16 as originally introduced, in face of the fact that the First Minister has promised that that shall not go to the consideration of the committee at all, but it shall be clause 16 as proposed to be amended?

Or, put in another way. Is it proposed to put off clause 2 and clause 16 until every other section of the Bill has been passed by this committee and then to force clause 16, as originally introduced, upon the House and into the Bill? Is that the proposition of the First Minister or the Minister of Finance? It is a singular thing that we have a statement of the Minister of Justice that he is giving his attention to clause 16 as originally introduced, while the Finance Minister, the First Minister and the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) have been giving their attention wholly to clause 16 as proposed to be amended by the First Minister. Now, so far as the law points are concerned, it is not necessary for us to discuss them here, because we can do that when the discussion on clauses 2 and 16 is proceeded with. I am not going into that point further than to say that the Minister of Justice has already stated on the floor of this House that that Bill, by his reading into it section 93 of the British North America Act would carry the section of the Act of 1875 relating to separate schools; and therefore it was not absolutely necessary to give a dual system of education to the west to enact these proposed amendments of the Prime Minister. The hon. member for Brandon said that the Act of 1875 gave a dual system. Does the Minister of Justice deny that, or the Minister of Finance, or the First Minister—does any of them deny it? The Minister of Justice is on record to the extent of saying that it was not necessary, in giving a dual system of schools, or a system of separate schools, to put into the Bill these proposed amendments to section 16, but, for the sake of certainty, for the sake of having no difficulty, they are put in, although the other is sufficient. I did not intend to speak at any length except with respect to the remarks of my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding). He

Mr. STOCKTON.

attacked my hon. friend from Lincoln (Mr. Lancaster) and asked what that gentleman had voted on. Why, Mr. Chairman, he voted against the principle of taking authority away from the provinces, a principle which the Minister of Finance at one time favoured. But what was the Minister of Finance voting on when he voted on the second reading? He was voting to follow his leader.

Mr. FIELDING. In that respect I differed from a large number of gentlemen on the other side of the House.

Mr. STOCKTON. Well, my hon. friend (Mr. Fielding) supports his leader and gives his political conscience into the keeping of the Minister of Justice. That is how he (Mr. Fielding) votes. I do not understand that he was voting on clause 16 as proposed to be amended by the First Minister, but that he was voting for his leader and to support the Minister of Justice. I have nothing more to say upon this point. When the legal question comes up, I expect to have something to say. I think the Minister of Justice has taken the correct course in taking time to state to the House what this clause means. I am glad he has done it, for I do not want the members sitting behind the minister to be able to tell their constituents, six months hence: We did not know it meant this; we did not know the gun was loaded; we thought it was an innocent toy, a mere pop-gun, something that would not injure anybody. We want them to know before they vote and before this becomes law that this may be an instrument that will put into the constitution controlling those western provinces something that these hon. gentlemen do not expect and something they would not have there if they thought it was going in.

Mr. SPROULE. I wish to say just a word on the right of the House to know what the Bill means. According to Bourinot the principle of a Bill is usually debated on the second reading. The Commons have no rule on this subject, but the practice of the House is always to discuss the principle of a Bill at this stage; and a member on setting forth reasons why the Bill could not be discussed satisfactorily, may move an amendment. Now, what are the principles of this Bill? There is the financial principle—the question of what will it be fair to furnish as an income for the support of the new provinces. Then there is the land principle, on which we decide whether we will or will not give the new provinces the lands which some think properly belong to them. Then there is the educational principle, on which we decide whether the people of that country shall or shall not have the right to provide for and control their system of education. Every one of these principles should be considered by the House before it passes judgment upon the