

is to keep within its terms, the proper course is simply to provide that the general provisions of the British North America Act shall apply, in so far as they are applicable to the new provinces. It is the only course to pursue, and I stated a moment ago, what I now repeat that if the government of this country, instead of embarking on their present course had simply confined themselves to a proposal of that kind, protecting the rights of all parties under the constitution, as it was originally framed, there would have been no arousing of passion, or prejudice, or strife, and this difficult and delicate question could, I think, have been settled without any such discord as that which we have unfortunately known in this country during the past few weeks. If the constitution imposes on the new provinces the restrictions which have been spoken of, why is it necessary to distort, to amend, to alter its language or to interpret the Acts referred to? Sir, it is not wise to follow a course which arouses passion, discord and discontent. Let the rights of all be governed according to the constitution, and no injustice will be done; and, more than that, no injustice will be felt. The right hon. gentleman and his colleagues have been advocates of provincial rights, champions of conciliation, in the past, and after all conciliation is better than coercion. The Prime Minister has laid that principle down many times, and I am sorry he has been so forgetful of it on the present occasion. Let us listen to what he said in 1890:

What I understand by provincial rights—and I suppose what my hon. friend must understand—is that the people of the Territories should decide for themselves whether or not they are to have the privilege or the onus of having two official languages.

And if he was willing then that the people of the Territories should have the right to determine what should be their language, whether they should have one official language or two, why should he be afraid now to entrust to the same people the rights of any man in those Territories in respect to education. Why should there be any fear? Is not the question of language something to my friends in the province of Quebec? I am led to believe and I do believe that next to the faith to which they are attached and of which they are proud, they take a legitimate pride in their own language. And why should they not? I am English speaking and Protestant, I am not ashamed of the race from which I have sprung or of the faith to which I hold and it is for that very reason that I honour the French Canadians, because they are firmly attached to that faith which they learned at their mothers' knees, because they revere that language which they learned from their mothers' lips and because they are proud of the traditions of that splendid race to which they belong—and every one of us should honour them

for that reason. Any man who has not some feeling of pride in his ancestry, who does not honour the traditions of the race from which he sprang, cannot be a good Canadian and it is well for the future of this country, it is well for the future of our people as a whole, that there should be in the two great races which dominate this country, a feeling on either side of attachment to language and of pride of race. My right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) was willing in days gone by to entrust that great question to the fair play and justice of the people of the Northwest. May I not ask in all sincerity, Mr. Speaker, why it is that there should be any fear now? But let me continue the quotation to which I just now referred.

If you remove that law, you take away from them the privilege which they now have of using two languages. I do not believe that is in the direction of provincial rights or provincial autonomy. The amendment of my hon. friend the Minister of Justice tends to uphold provincial rights and local autonomy, and I am happy to extend my congratulations to the Prime Minister and to his government that more and more and day by day the force of circumstances brings them over to this principle.

You will observe that the right hon. gentleman in view of his attachment to provincial institutions, and provincial autonomy was then actually congratulating the leader of the Conservative government of the day because he was disposed to leave, and did leave after the next general election the question of language entirely to the justice and fair play of the people of the Northwest Territories. Yet he takes an entirely opposite stand to-day and insists that restrictions not to be found in the British North America Act shall be imposed on the people of the Northwest Territories. Then he went on:

If the hon. member for Simcoe instead of placing as a basis of his Bill that there should be a community of language, and that this community of language should extend everywhere in the Dominion where French is spoken, had simply left it to the will and desire of the people of the Territories, we would not have one half or one-tenth part of the trouble we have over this question.

And I will tell my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) that (to use his own words), if he had simply left this question of education to the will and desire of the people of the Territories, constituted as they are about to be into provinces, we would not have one-tenth or one-hundredth part of the trouble that we are having in Canada to-day over this question.

The right hon. gentleman in 1896, when he stood as the champion of the liberties of the people, as the vindicator of provincial rights said:

Experience has taught us that this remedy of interference with local legislation has never been applied and probably never can be ap-