

separate school. That is what will happen up there. I again draw attention to the fact that this is another interference with the rights of the province. What right has the province to-day in regard to these ordinances? The Lieutenant Governor in Council has the right to appoint a commissioner of education. That commissioner of education representing the Crown has a right to dissolve a school, to do away with all trustees, to take possession of the school and to direct how it shall be run and to say what shall be the character of that school. If that is done what will be the effect of this amendment upon the commissioner of education, who is a member of the government itself?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Nothing at all. It will be the same as it is to-day.

Mr. SPROULE. He is not one of the trustees. The ordinance says that the education shall be education as prescribed by the trustees.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. This amendment will not change anything. The law will remain as it is, and the commissioner of education will have the same power as he has to-day under the law.

Mr. SPROULE. The same power?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Certainly.

Mr. SPROULE. Then he can only disobey this law, and if so, it does not give to the people what it professes to give.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The hon. gentleman takes a meaning out of this amendment which it does not bear. This amendment is simply to confirm what exists to-day. It adds nothing to it and takes nothing away from what has existed for thirty years. It will continue it in existence. The commissioner has this power and he exercises it to-day just as he will in the future.

Mr. SPROULE. The hon. gentleman who moves this amendment says that the present clause provides for religious instruction in separate schools, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, but it does not provide for religious instruction in public schools and it is to provide for religious instruction in public schools that this amendment is introduced. I am saying that it does provide for religious instruction in all the public schools, but that religious instruction is what the trustees of the school desire and therefore I say this amendment and in fact this whole Bill constitute an attack upon provincial rights and upon the public school system of the country.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Before this question is put I want to say a word or two in reply to what the right hon. leader of the government has just said. He seems to think that it is an absolutely conclusive

argument to say that this law simply perpetuates what is in force in the Northwest Territories to-day. That would be just as good an argument in regard to every line and syllable of chapters 29 and 30. The question is not what is there to-day or whether it has been satisfactory; the question is: What will these provinces require in the future? That which is satisfactory to-day may not be satisfactory in ten years. If my right hon. friend's argument were good he would take every line and every syllable of chapters 29 and 30 and say that not one line or syllable of these ordinances should ever be changed by the provinces about to be constituted in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. HERRON. I wish to ask the Prime Minister, how many classes of people in the Northwest Territories will be entitled to separate schools under this law?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The question is not relevant to the question we are discussing, but I may say that the number of separate schools, whether this amendment is adopted or not, would remain just the same; it does not affect the question at all.

Mr. BARR. This is an amendment of too great importance to be voted upon at one o'clock in the morning, especially since it was sprung upon the House only an hour ago. The member for Saskatchewan must have very little confidence in the legislatures of these new provinces when he seeks to impose upon them legislation of this kind which they cannot change, although it should prove to be for the worst interests of the community. The argument he used in favour of his amendment was the very strongest argument why it should not become law. Suppose the Mormon majority in a locality would elect in a locality Mormon trustees and these trustees provided religious teaching which was most objectionable to the minority, it would be impossible for the legislature to change the government of these schools for all time to come, if this law should pass. Reference has been made to the fact that in Ontario they have had at different times religious teaching in the schools. That is quite true, but instead of its being a blessing it was a curse, and the people of Ontario changed it, and although the law is there to-day it is a dead letter. In these new provinces into which immigrants are coming from various foreign countries, it can be easily seen that if they are allowed to have control of the teaching in the schools it might be most injurious to the whole community.

Mr. SCOTT. In what way?

Mr. BARR. I am trying to tell the hon. gentleman and if he has brains enough to understand I can prove it to him. The hon. gentleman from Saskatchewan said that the new provinces were all in favour of this