

—so I am informed and believe to be the case—that is to be found in any of the provinces of Canada. The Territories have a system which I think may well be perpetuated. We on this side of the House are not opposing this Bill with a view to that system not being perpetuated; but we point out that hon. gentlemen opposite are making a mistake if they think that national schools are what are provided for in the Bill, when they only have half an hour for religious instruction at the close of the day. Hon. gentlemen treat the distinction between the two classes of schools at present existing in the Northwest as so small as to be no distinction at all. I think the Minister of Finance spoke of them in that sense, so that soon the separate schools would disappear. I think the hon. member for Centre York (Mr. A. Campbell) has expressed the same view, for this is what I find in one of the Toronto papers:

Archie Campbell, M.P., has written to L.O.L. No. 900, Toronto Junction, to reassure that lodge on the subject of the school clauses of the Autonomy Bill. Mr. Campbell says he would oppose the Bill if separate schools, such as we have in Ontario, were to be established under the law. But he is convinced that such schools can never be instituted. In fact, if the law be passed in its present shape the few separate schools that are now there—in the Northwest—will disappear, and at the end of five years there will not be a separate school left. They will all be national schools.

Now, is that the view of hon. gentlemen opposite, that they are passing this legislation with the view of having the few separate schools at present in the Northwest disappear? Yet that is the language of one hon. gentleman who sits behind the government, and who apparently is supporting their action on this very important question. I hope that is not the motive; I do not think it would be honest.

We have heard something, Mr. Speaker, about clerical interference. I suppose I may be said to be clerically interfered with when I submit two or three resolutions which I have received. I submit these resolutions now, because I have had no other opportunity of doing so. The following resolution of the Ministerial Association of Brantford, the city from which I have the honour to come, has been sent to me and a copy, I believe, was sent to the hon. the First Minister:

Moved by Rev. W. T. Graham, seconded by Rev. T. A. Wright.

Whereas the Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has introduced a Bill in the House of Commons, creating two new provinces, and in said Bill there is a clause fastening separate schools on said provinces for all time to come.

And whereas we believe this is calculated to breed strife and disintegration in our Dominion, and is not helpful in the building up of a new country,

Mr. COCKSHUTT.

And whereas it is an interference with provincial rights, and a violation of the principle of the separation of church and state.

Therefore, we the Ministerial Alliance of the city of Brantford protest against such action and request the government to leave the question of education to the control of the new provinces.

Carried unanimously.

I have also the following resolution from the Baptist Union:

Resolved that we, the Baptist ministers of the city of Brantford, protest against the attempt of the government at Ottawa to fasten upon the new western provinces a separate school system, and that the whole question of education be left in the hands of the provinces; and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and to W. F. Cockshutt, the member of this city.

Rev. W. T. Graham, President.

Secretary, J. H. Kelly.

Mr. HYMAN. Might I ask the hon. gentleman, is he in accord with both of those resolutions.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Is the member for London in accord with them?

Mr. HYMAN. The member for London can take care of himself.

Mr. COCKSHUTT. These resolutions are in accord with the argument that I have already advanced. The hon. member for London, I think, has not been in the House while I have been speaking, or he would understand pretty well where I stand on this question. So far as I have spoken, I have endeavoured to express my own convictions, and I only hope that when the hon. member for London rises to address the House, he will express his convictions as honestly and candidly as I have expressed mine.

The hon. gentleman has not told us whether those were in accord with his views, so that I have no opportunity of knowing what his views are, and consequently no opportunity of combating them. I do not wish to take up the time of the House to any greater extent, as I have already spoken longer than I intended. Before closing however I wish to say that I consider that the consultation which was held between the right hon. the First Minister and the representative of the Roman Catholic church at present in the city of Ottawa was not in good judgment or sound policy, and will not receive the approbation of the majority of the people of this country. I believe that it is competent for every gentleman in this House to consult his own church authorities and to listen, to what extent he pleases, to those who are his spiritual advisers, especially in a matter of such great importance as the present; but I do believe that in all cases the gentlemen who are consulted, whoever they may be, should be citizens of the Dominion.