

Further on he says :

But there cannot be under this system any control of the school by any clerical or sectarian body.

The aim of the hon. gentleman is to show that he is opposed to clerical or sectarian teaching more than anything else. Well, Sir, let me tell him that those who are in favour of separate schools in the proper sense of the word are in favour of clerical and sectarian teaching, or otherwise those schools would not deserve the name of separate schools. He says :

There cannot be any sectarian teaching between nine o'clock in the morning and half-past three in the afternoon. So that, so far as we have objections to separate schools based upon the idea of church control, clerical control, or ecclesiasticism in any form, this system of schools is certainly not open to that objection.

And yet the newspapers which are supporting the government in the province of Quebec are boasting that the Prime Minister is preserving for ever the separate school system which the people of the Northwest Territories had at first—not the present system of separate schools existing there, which does not amount to anything. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Sifton) goes on to speak of Manitoba and he boasts of what he has done :

When we in the province of Manitoba undertook to remove what was a school system that I said was inefficient to the point of absurdity, we found ourselves confronted with many and serious difficulties.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I stated this afternoon what I believed to be the real cause of the changing of the school law in Manitoba, and when the member for Brandon says that the clerical school system is inefficient, I can refer him to such an excellent authority as the right hon. the Prime Minister who will tell him that he is entirely mistaken. If the hon. gentleman said that the elementary schools in our province, or in other provinces for that matter, if he said that what we call in French *les petites écoles* are not perfect, there might be some ground for his statement, because it is unfortunately true that those who pay for the maintenance of these schools do not contribute sufficient to secure the services of first-class teachers. However, these elementary schools are mostly attended by very young children and up to the present time they have been found fairly sufficient for their purpose. But when the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) makes the sweeping assertion that clerical schools are inefficient he simply does not know what he is talking about. Let him look around him in this House and see the men on both sides, who are the alumni of clerical schools. Let him look at the men in this chamber who have been taught in colleges and schools

conducted by priests ; let him look at the men who have received what he calls a clerical education, and perhaps he will revise his judgment. The hon. member for Brandon has not to look only on this side of the House ; let him look at the men sitting around him and beside him who have received their education in schools controlled by the clergy, and I think he will have to admit that they are men of education, men of high attainments, men of whom any country might well be proud.

More than that ; the hon. member for Brandon is unjust, because, if I am well informed—and I have taken my information from some newspapers of repute published in the province of Manitoba—the Catholic university of St. Boniface to-day is above competition. It is understood that in that university, the young men in the highest classes have nobody to compete with, from Toronto to the Pacific coast and they are obliged to compete amongst themselves. They have carried off prizes, medals and every distinction. Nobody knows this better than the hon. member for Brandon. These young men are taught by ecclesiastics ; they are the subjects of clerical schools. So I say to those who might be tempted to believe him that when the hon. gentleman talks of the inefficiency of clerical education, he is out of the way altogether.

In answer to my hon. friend the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson), who had declared that the proceedings of the Manitoba government in abolishing separate schools in that province might have been obnoxious to somebody, the hon. member for Brandon said : ' Well, Sir, I am here to say that we cannot abolish abuses of that kind by handling people with kid gloves.' No, we all know that he did not use kid gloves. We all know that not only was the minority in Manitoba robbed of its system of schools, not only was the French language abolished, which is something appreciated by those who speak that language, but their buildings to the amount of \$14,000 were stolen from them by the Manitoba government and were never given back to them. So when the hon. gentleman says that he did not use kid gloves, he is right. I would rather say he used a crowbar or a pince-monseigneur to steal the separate schools of Manitoba, or what they had and their buildings.

My hon. friend from Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) speaks very well—I have heard him before—but he always comes to a conclusion entirely different from his premises. Every time I have heard him on these subjects, I have always seen him starting against the government and finishing by being entirely with the government. He thought he would make a point in his speech by criticising my hon. friend the leader of the opposition. He even went so far as to say that he had lost confidence in the leader of the opposi-

Mr. BERGERON