

ing his wigwam and met a traveller in the forest. He asked the traveller if he could tell him where he was. 'Why,' the traveller said, 'you are an Indian. Are you lost?' 'No,' said he, 'but the wigwam is lost.' In like manner, while the principle remains, these hon. gentlemen opposite have drifted away from their wigwam. They have taken another track, and are advocating principles the very opposite of those they formerly contended for. I would ask the Reformers of Ontario how they will justify their conduct of to-day before the people of that province? I remember when a motion was made in this House calling on the British authorities to grant home rule to Ireland. Every Reformer, without a single exception, voted for it.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. How did the hon. gentleman vote?

Mr. SPROULE. I can tell him very well if he would like to know.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. I certainly would.

Mr. SPROULE. They contended that home rule for Ireland was the proper principle. They were advocating giving home rule to a territory over which they had no control, but when they have in their own country a territory to which they are giving provincial autonomy, they refuse to give it home rule. Where they have the power to give home rule they will not do it; but where they have no power they insist on its being given. They are something like Mark Twain who was willing to sacrifice all his wife's relations on the altar of his country. In like manner these hon. gentlemen are willing to sacrifice every one of their principles in order to keep office. They are evidently not in accord on the principle of home rule because if they were they would give the Territories the fullest measure of self government and political autonomy but in reality we are not. Can it be said that we are granting them full provincial autonomy, when we interfere with their rights to deal with education, although it is expressly laid down in the British North America Act that the provinces shall exclusively make laws on that subject. If we compel them to adopt an educational system which we prescribe, though it may be quite unsuited to their needs and conditions, are we giving them home rule? But we are told that the fathers of confederation accepted the principle of separate schools rather than jeopardize confederation. Sir, the great principle was not that of separate schools. The great difficulty the fathers of confederation had to confront was the deadlock between the different sides of the House. It was not the question of separate schools which was the disturbing element between upper and lower Canada. Not at all. But when the fathers of confederation were enacting the British North America

Mr. SPROULE.

Act, they had to provide for the conditions that existed in these two provinces and consequently had to provide for separate schools. They accepted the conditions existing in Ontario and Quebec and provided that should other provinces come in with similar rights in existence, these rights should continue. But there were four provinces entering confederation which had not these rights. If however the principle of separate schools was established at confederation, why do we not have it in these four provinces?

This clause which is objected to, said the right hon. gentleman, is the law to-day, it is in accordance with the constitution, and I commend it even to the biased judgment of my hon. friend from East Grey. He referred to the hon. member from East Grey in different lights that day, and I think in a manner quite uncalled for and which did not come with the best grace from one occupying the dignified position of Premier of this Dominion. It was a gratuitous assumption on his part that the member for East Grey has a biased mind and is not fair. No one, he said, is so blind as the one who will not see, and of course the hon. member for East Grey was in that category. Well, I think that the hon. member for East Grey ought to be credited with possessing the ordinary intelligence which the average member of parliament is usually credited with. If we were in 1867 instead of 1905 and if we had to introduce into the Dominion the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, would we not, asks the right hon. gentleman, have to give these provinces the same rights and privileges with regard to separate schools as we gave Ontario and Quebec? I say emphatically no, and I am confirmed in that conclusion by the advice of that high authority, Mr. Christopher Robinson, whose opinion I have cited. In my judgment the question we have to settle is this. Is it proper to interfere with the rights of these provinces in the matter of education? The Minister of Finance says there is a moral obligation resting on us to do it. But is that moral obligation sufficiently strong to justify our interfering with provincial rights and compelling the majority of the country to do what they say it is impossible to carry out successfully under their present conditions. Would that be sound policy? These are the questions that appeal to our judgment to-day. In the first place is it right, as a question of principle? In the second place is it sound as a question of policy? It might possibly be right in principle and still not be sound as a matter of policy. As a matter of policy is it wise to compel the people to provide for separate schools for all time whether suited to the conditions out there or not? I do not think it is and am therefore opposed to any interference with provincial rights. If we grant educational rights to one church, we must logically grant them to every church. These