

things, would have been correct. With the other gentlemen to whom my hon. friend has alluded, I was against the coercion of Manitoba; I said it would be an infringement of provincial rights—why? Because I did not sympathize with the minority? No. Why, then? For the same reason that actuated the other gentlemen and actuated the Liberal party. It had been declared by the court of last resort, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, that, as it seemed to the minority in that province, their rights had been abrogated by the Bill that had been passed by the Manitoba legislature, but that nevertheless the Manitoba legislature had acted within its powers, that, acting within its powers, it must be the judge, and that therefore it was inexpedient and would be against provincial rights, to pass a law in the Dominion parliament which would set aside, override, supersede, legislation passed by a provincial legislature which was entirely within its competence. That, Sir, was the reason we opposed interference. Now, I have not read what I said on that occasion, if it is recorded anywhere; I have not had time. I have not even read the utterances of other gentlemen, as some of the hon. gentlemen opposite have done; but if there are any recorded utterances of mine, I have no doubt that they will be found to be in the direction in which I have spoken. That position I took, and for that position I contended; and in supporting this Bill, am I taking back anything I said at that time? Am I in a position different from what I was in at that time? Am I now an opponent of provincial rights? Am I now supporting the Bill to override an enactment passed by a legislature having full competence to pass that enactment? Nothing of the kind. There is no such proposition; the cases are not parallel. Find the strongest utterance you can, made by any member of the Liberal party in defence of the provincial rights of Manitoba and the decision of the Privy Council, and you will find it none too strong, unless it was couched in offensive language, as I trust none was. But to claim, as we heard it claimed this afternoon, that the present measure is an invasion of provincial rights, is something that I cannot understand. What law of the Territories that are about to become provinces are we seeking to override? It is said: you are passing a law—which is true. But what law of the Territories are we passing a law to do away with?

Mr. LALOR. A law to do away with provincial rights.

Mr. PATERSON. The answer of the hon. gentleman is not a correct answer, and therefore I must ask again. Suppose I try the hon. member for South York (Mr. W. F. Maclean); he would give me a different answer to that, I think. What are we doing? We have submitted a Bill for the considera-

tion of this House—what for? To override legislation enacted by the Territories? To wipe out and do away with laws which they have passed? Will any hon. gentleman say that we are? Most undoubtedly not. Do you say to me: but you are passing a law to continue an Act that is on the statute-book of the Territories. I say, yes, but who passed that Act? This Dominion parliament? No; Premier Haultain, his government, and the members of the Northwest assembly. It is their Act. There is chapter 29, chapter 30, chapter 31, passed of their own free motion by the representatives of the people in the Territories. And what are we proposing to do? What hon. gentlemen opposite wanted us to do in the Manitoba case—to repeal that, to abrogate it? No; simply to continue it. Talk about Mr. Haultain not having been consulted. He says he was consulted twice; but if he had never been consulted, if no Northwest member had ever been consulted, I ask, what better indication can you have of the desires of the people of the Northwest Territories than their own legislation? It may be said that Mr. Haultain has stated that he thinks this question should be left to the provincial legislature. But, if correctly reported, when asked: if it were left to the legislatures of the provinces when constituted, would they change the law? His answer was, if I remember rightly: 'If I were a dictator to-morrow, I would not change it.' Yet these gentlemen talk about provincial rights being invaded by this Bill. Amid all the doubts and uncertainties that our constitutional lawyers in this House and outside of this House present, in reference to ascertaining what are the facts of the case, if, as I believe, from advice which I have received from men in whose legal knowledge I have confidence we have the power under the amendment to the British North America Act of 1871 to pass this law which we have submitted for the approval of this House and if this Bill simply provides for the continuance of the law which was passed by the men who represented the Northwest Territories three years ago, and which has been in existence for three years without, so far as I am aware, any man having lifted up his voice against it, is it not better to deal with this question now, to settle this question in this way, rather than to leave it open to be a very possible cause of discord, and a means of holding back the prosperity and the progress of this Dominion?

Objection is taken to this law by friends in other provinces. Why? Because they say that the law passed by the Territories provides for separate schools—and so it does. And this Dominion parliament in 1875 said that there should be privileges given to minorities, whether Protestant or Catholic, in the country to form separate schools if they so desired. That Act, passed under-