

course, be some reason other than individual reasons; there must of necessity be some public, national reason, when we find in every land the nation, in self-defence, taking charge of this particular item of education, and when we find every civilized nation agreeing as to the importance that is attached to supplying its youth with the best possible education they can receive. I think, Sir, we may take it for granted that the reason the state desires to control the education of its youth is that intelligent peoples recognize that the greatest handicap to which youth can be subjected is the want of education. We know perfectly well in our own country that if two lads start out in life, one handicapped by a lack of education and the other possessed of an education, there is no doubt who will be the successful man and who will be the hewer of wood and drawer of water for the other. The same thing applies as between nations. We all recognize that if one nation looks after the education of its youth, while another nation neglects to do so, the nation which neglects the education of its youth will be the servant of the other. To-day the nations of the world have taken upon themselves to look after the subject of education for the reason that I have given.

Why is it that in this country education is, by the British North America Act, allotted to the provinces? We have the division of a great many powers given under the British North America Act. To the Dominion is allotted the power to legislate exclusively on many subjects and to the provinces is allotted the power to legislate exclusively on many other subjects. Is there any reason why, in our own country, this particular subject of education has been allotted to the provinces? I think there is a well-known reason, and I am going to point out that, although it has frequently been said in this debate that the provinces have not the exclusive right to legislate on that subject as they have touching other matters, practically they have the exclusive right. There is a limitation to their right to legislate upon education. They cannot legislate as freely perhaps as they can legislate on other subjects, but their right is exclusive. No other power has the right to legislate, except that in certain cases an application can be made to the Dominion, under the remedial clause, which, as was illustrated in the Manitoba school case, has been practically blotted out of the statute-book. We ask why it is that in our country the Dominion has no jurisdiction or legislative power, except in exceptional cases, in regard to education and that the power of legislation is given exclusively to the provinces? We have the answer to that. We know that the great father of confederation, Sir John Macdonald himself, favoured a legislative and not a federal union. His idea was to have a great central parliament, as they have it in the mother country, conferring greater powers on the county councils and, to save expense, dispensing with the local

legislatures. But he was unable to carry out his idea of a legislative union, and the main reason why a legislative union was not carried out by the Dominion of Canada was that the great province of Quebec insisted that the control of education must be left to the provinces. Let me quote a speech in the parliamentary debates on the New Brunswick School Act. Sir John Macdonald, then premier, spoke as follows:

It was known to every one that the question of education had threatened confederation at its very inception, and a proposition that education should be left to the general legislature of the Dominion would have been enough to secure the repudiation of confederation by the people of Lower Canada, and it was therefore expressly provided in the Act of union that the question should be entirely left to the different provinces with the provision that whenever there was a separate system in force that system should not be interfered with.

So we find that to-day what we of the opposition are contending for, that the exclusive right of legislation touching education shall be left to the newly created provinces, was carried out in accordance with the principle laid down by the province of Quebec, which determined the question whether or not we should have a legislative or a federal government in this country. We now come to these educational clauses that we have before us. We have heard a great deal about the rights of minorities, and I would be very sorry to say a word against the rights of minorities. I have in days gone by in this House stood up for the rights of minorities, even though I knew the penalty I must pay was the loss of my seat in this House; and I have never since regretted that, because, although I lost my seat, I had the consciousness of doing what I believed to be right. I have no hesitation in saying that it is incumbent on any majority, not merely to be just to the minority, for there is no credit to a majority any more than to a man in being just, but I think it is in honour incumbent on the majority to be generous to the minority in all matters in which the minority take a deep interest, and there is no matter in which they take a deeper interest than in that of education. Therefore, I say there is no hon. member of this House who would have greater consideration for the feelings of the minority, to whatever class the minority might belong, than I myself. But while paying all possible respect to the feelings of the minority, we would be unworthy of our positions in this House if we entirely shut our eyes to the feelings or rights, or supposed rights, of the majority, because, where there is a minority, there must be a majority. It has been said in this House, and I was very sorry to hear the statement—a statement with which I do not agree, made by no less a personage than my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding)—that so grave was this question, so violently exciting to the country, and so bitter were the passions that had been aroused, that if the right