

made, but it was felt that men could not be deprived of the privileges that they had been so permitted to enjoy. Nor can it be said that it would simply follow from my argument that the carrying out of the principle to which I refer would protect only those few particular separate schools, Protestant and Catholic, now in actual existence, for the right was conferred upon, and the right has been enjoyed by, not only certain individual schools, but by Roman Catholics as a body and Protestants as a body.

It might, however, by some, be thought justifiable and right to abandon this well established practice and usage if it were shown to be sufficiently necessary in the public interest, and the question therefore arises, is it necessary? We are told that to follow the custom and to conform to the minorities of the west the rights and privileges they have so long possessed, while productive, it may be, of no other evil, would by reason of section 93 of the British North America Act, be a violation of the sacred doctrine of provincial rights. But does it not appear that that section 93 was enacted not so much to protect the rights of provincial parliaments or of Dominion parliaments as to protect the established rights of people and of individuals who, whether Protestant or Catholic, being in a minority, may be in some danger of having those rights assailed by a majority acting upon the principle that might is right? and, if such was the object of the Act, then is not the argument that the Territories were admitted in 1870 not in 1905 or that the word 'province' in that Act does not include 'territories' even though those territories have had a form of self-government, a mere subtlety and an attempt to take an advantage of a legal technicality to avoid the true spirit of the Act?

I do not believe that the present Bill, as amended, will be satisfactory to every man. It would be utterly impossible to amend or to create an Act that would. I do, however, believe that very many people—Reformers, Conservatives, Orangemen—who have been much dissatisfied will be perfectly satisfied when they find how vastly great the difference between the so-called separate schools and separate school laws of the west and the separate schools and separate school laws of Ontario, when they find, Sir, the true position as to the separate school laws and the separate school practice in the west. In order to show what those laws are, let me quote from a letter of a special correspondent of the 'Daily Globe' which appears in the 'Globe' of February 13, last. I do not quote the language of that correspondent of the 'Globe' in order to give his opinion or arguments, but to give the law as he has set it forth in language which is so easily understood and so concise. He says:

Since 1893 the separate schools have been subject to the same general control, direction, and support as the public schools, and have had the benefit of a vigorous, intelligent, and progressive administration. Between the work done now in the Territorial public school and that in the separate school up to half-past three o'clock each day there is practically no difference. Teachers undergo uniform academic and professional training. The course of studies is uniform. The text books are uniform, with the exception of the First and Second Readers. Inspection is common and uniform. Departmental examinations are uniform. . . . All schools shall be taught in the English language.

When our people know that it is not permitted that there shall be in any school, of the west whether a public or a separate school, any religious teaching or instruction whatever in any hour of any day of any week of the school year save only the short half hour between 3.30 p.m. and 4 o'clock p.m., and that during that half hour no pupil need attend whose parent or guardian objects, and that therefore the separate schools of the west are practically and to all intents and purposes public schools, they will readily understand, I am sure, how it is that in all the great Territories that are to be embraced in the two new provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta there are to-day more than a thousand public schools and yet that there are only ten Roman Catholic separate schools; and eight of these Roman Catholic separate schools are in the larger towns where in every instance there is also a public school and there are only two Roman Catholic separate schools in the rural or country districts. When our people know that there is nothing whatever in this legislation to in any way cripple, or in any way interfere with or restrict the rights of the new provincial parliaments to keep the efficiency of these separate schools up to their present high standard, or to prevent the governments of these new provinces from regulating these schools as to the employment of teachers, as to the examination and certification of teachers, as to the use of text books, the holding of examinations and as to inspections; when they know that there is nothing whatever in this legislation or in any legislation that has been proposed or that will be submitted to this House to compel the new provincial governments to depart, to the extent of a single farthing, from the present method of disposing of the school funds or the proceeds of the sale of school lands, they will, I am sure, not be anxious either as to the probable multiplication or as to the probable decadence of the separate school in the west. The 'Mail and Empire' in an editorial contained in its issue of March 17 last, says:

To-day there is peace and good feeling throughout the Territories.