

false. I claim that if a straight appeal was made to the people of the English-speaking provinces to give to the Roman Catholic minority in the Northwest one-tenth of the privileges possessed by the Protestants in the province of Quebec, the same response would be given that has been given in London and North Oxford. In spite of the position taken by the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Finance, I claim that the majority of the people of London and of North Oxford voted in the belief that they were giving separate schools to all the Catholics of the Northwest. I would ask the Minister of Public Works, I would ask the newly elected member for North Oxford (Mr. G. Smith), whether 5 per cent of the electors who voted for them supposed that they were depriving nine-tenths of the Catholics of the Northwest of separate schools. I know they did not think so. I will go further, and I say there were not ten electors on the government side who knew the real meaning of this law.

Mr. SPROULE. That is complimentary to the intelligence of the electorate.

Mr. BOURASSA. After what has been said on both sides in this House, I doubt whether 1 per cent of the electors of this country really know where they are. Now, Sir, I think this disposes of the argument that the minority are satisfied, as it also disposes of the argument that the English-speaking majority in this parliament and in this country are not prepared to do justice. Now we are told that the second clause is clearer than the first. It is clearer on one point, that it leaves so little advantage to the Roman Catholics that it is not worth mentioning. Is that a ground on which this government should stand as the defenders of the minority? It is stated that some sacrifice has been made to the opinions of the majority. I do not know why. Is it because the English Protestant people have demanded it? No, Sir. The division between the Protestant people of this country has been as to whether there should be any separate schools in the Northwest at all. The majority of Canadians do not split hairs, the people of this country have already pronounced upon the question as to whether we will give separate schools to the Northwest. If I asked to-day for the establishment of such separate schools in the Northwest as the Protestants enjoy in the province of Quebec, at first sight perhaps they would not be willing to grant them. But I say that when we reduce our demands to the mere right of separation, the Protestant people of this country, the people of London, the people of Oxford—I will go further and say the people of Toronto, would answer, yes, we are ready to give separate schools to the Catholics of the Northwest, we are ready to give them not only to the minority in any particular section but to the majority as well.

I know there are those who oppose separate schools on principle. There are men who are always ready to copy American institutions in preference to British institutions, lawyers as well as laymen. Let me tell them that I am a true British subject, imbued with the true spirit of British institutions, and I will cling to the old British system of freedom of education in preference to the nefarious system of education adopted by the Americans. But if these gentlemen cannot go as far as I do in adopting British institutions, at least I ask them not to be Yankees enough to deprive people of the right of educating their children in the elementary principles of their nationality and their religion. I repeat, the argument which is now made by friends of the government in the province of Quebec is not one upon which conciliation can be obtained. You cannot make the people in Quebec believe that the vast majority of the English-speaking Protestants are so fanatical that they will not allow the minority to have the same rights in the Northwest that the Boers have in South Africa and the natives have in India. That is not the way to create a feeling of conciliation and harmony between the races and creeds of this country.

Now, Sir, let us consider the argument made by the Minister of Finance that by adopting the new clause we are paying more respect to provincial rights. With all deference to the hon. minister, it seems to me that is one of the most extraordinary arguments I have heard. Is it paying more respect to the rights of the people of the Northwest who will live in 1930 to tell them: You are bound by the law of 1901—than to tell them, you are bound by the law of 1875? Do you say it is respectful of provincial rights to say to the people of the Northwest, here is one of your ordinances passed in such a year by such an assembly and you will never get free from it, so far as separate schools are concerned? If you need take a northwest ordinance as the basis of your education clause, why don't you take the ordinance of 1885, which emanates from the same authority as that of 1901? The difference between the law of 1885 and that of 1901 is that the former was in conformity with our own law, and therefore by adopting the law of 1885 we would respect the principle of provincial rights as viewed by the Finance Minister, with the additional advantage that we would be respecting ourselves and our past. But in adopting the law of 1901 we are breaking our pledges, and at the same time we are not respecting provincial rights.

Sir, there is only one way to find our way out of all these difficulties. There is only one choice and that is to respect the doctrine which was laid down by my right hon. friend the Prime Minister on the 21st of February—respect provincial rights as far as provincial rights are respected by our constitution and no further.