

Manitoba.' 'There will be no coercion Act under Laurier.' The slogan of that day raised against the exercise of coercion under a perfectly constitutional power, should ring to-day in thunder tones in the ears of those from whose lips it then resounded. Let there be no domination of provincial liberties by the federal power, let no violent hands be laid upon the charter in which those liberties are enshrined.

Mr. Speaker, it remains for me to state to the House what action I shall take at the present time, holding the views and convictions which I have expressed. Upon the second reading of any public Bill the question of principle is discussed. So far as this Bill grants provincial autonomy, I am heartily in support of it; in so far as this Bill withholds from the new provinces any rights to which I think they are justly entitled under the terms of the constitution, I am not in favour of it. I shall, therefore, adopt a course which has in the past been adopted by hon. gentlemen opposite on more than one occasion, a course for which there is ample precedent, both in the parliament of Great Britain and in the parliament of this country; I shall adopt the course of moving that:

All the words after the word 'that' to the end of the question be left out and the following substituted therefor:—

Upon the establishment of a province in the Northwest Territories of Canada as proposed by Bill (No. 69), the legislature of such province, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of the British North America Acts 1867 to 1886, is entitled to and should enjoy full powers of provincial self government including power to exclusively make laws in relation to education.

The effect of this amendment is not to defeat the Bill.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Hear, hear.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. My right hon. friend says 'hear, hear.' I do not want the Bill defeated; I want the Bill amended so that it shall give to the people of the Northwest Territories the full measure of self-government to which they are entitled under the terms of the constitution. It is for that reason that I have made my motion in amendment, in order that I may embody therein the principle which I think should be applied to this Bill. If carried, it will not defeat the Bill; if carried, the result will simply be that the Bill is placed on the order paper on a subsequent day, and it will go to committee with the opinion of this House in favour of the principle which I have advocated. That is the position which I think I ought to assume under the circumstances; at all events, that is the position which I do assume, and by which I am prepared to stand.

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Minister of Finance). Mr. Speaker, I do not quite understand the procedure under which my hon.

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friend the leader of the opposition has proposed this amendment and, so far as I do understand it, I do not agree with him as to the effect which it may have upon the measure that is now before the House. The motion now before the House is that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. 'Be now read.'

Mr. FIELDING. That is the motion which has been placed in your hands. The motion is that this Bill be read a second time. My hon. friend moves to strike out all the words after 'that,' and express a pious opinion on one portion of the Bill. It seems to me that after you have struck out all the words of the motion that the Bill be now read a second time, there is no Bill left. It is certainly not the usual method whereby anybody moves an amendment. If an hon. member regards the main purpose of a Bill—whatever he may be pleased to consider its main purpose—with favour and disapproves of some minor part of it, his obvious duty is to support the second reading of that Bill, and when in committee we reach the clause to which he objects, then is the proper moment to move that that clause be struck out and something else be substituted. I think the method of my hon. friend is a mistaken one; however, I do not attach much importance to that, and I prefer to proceed with the discussion.

I need hardly say, Sir, that I do not rise for the purpose of following my hon. friend in the very lengthy argument he has addressed to this House on what he is pleased to regard as the constitutional questions involved in the consideration of this measure. If I felt, as he appears to feel, that the constitutional questions involved are the overshadowing questions, I need hardly say that I would not presume to address the House at this moment, but I would leave the question to be dealt with by hon. members of the legal profession, who are supposed to understand such matters better than those of us who are laymen. But it is because I do not agree with my hon. friend that the constitutional question is the overshadowing question that I venture to discuss the matter at the present stage. I do not believe that the people of Canada will consent that any one of us shall shelter himself behind the fence of an alleged constitutional question. This school question is a vexed question, a troublesome question. We can all say with the fullest sincerity that it is a misfortune that we have to deal with it. But once we have it here, my belief is that our constituents, the people of Canada, will expect us not to evade it, but to meet it fairly, boldly, to discuss it openly, discuss it in a generous spirit, and endeavour to find some solution of the difficult problem. I do not agree with my hon. friend that we are not called upon to discuss the question of separate schools or common schools. I believe that the people of the Dominion to-day are not occupying their minds with an elaborate analysis of constitutional questions