

I ought to have said, perhaps, earlier in my speech that I am strongly of the opinion that had the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and the hon. ex-Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) been here we certainly would not have seen the Bill we have seen introduced into this House. I think we never would have seen these educational clauses in it. It seems to me that if the right hon. First Minister had been well advised, and I am afraid he was not, these clauses would have been left out and the constitution that the British North America Act provides for these provinces would have gone into operation without any let or hindrance from this parliament. It does seem to me that that would have been the fairest thing to do. We would have saved all this discussion and all this bad feeling. We would not have seen what we are seeing every day here—a debate on a question that we really ought to have nothing to do with because we ought to be willing to give our fellow subjects the same rights as we claim for ourselves. I notice that the hon. ex-Minister of the Interior, the hon. Finance Minister and even some hon. gentlemen from the Northwest have stated that if the decision were left to them whether there should be separate schools or not they would not have them, but rather than have this government go out of office, rather than have the possibility of a Liberal Conservative administration they would bury their principles, have three, or four, or five years in parliament and take the chance of the people forgetting what they have done. It seems to me from the speech made by the hon. Finance Minister in this House that those were the tactics which were pursued in the caucus. When this was brought before the members in caucus they said to them: If you vote us out there will be a general election, you will have all the odium of this Bill and the Tories will beat you; you had better vote for it and stay in.

Now, there was a pretty strong resolution passed at this meeting. I have not heard it read in the House up to this time. It appeared in the Toronto 'News' on the 21st March, 1905. I do not suppose I dare mention that name in this House.

At the mass meeting held in the Massey Hall last evening to protest against the school clause of the Autonomy Bill the following resolution was moved by Mr. D. E. Thomson, seconded by Rev. Dr. Milligan, and carried unanimously:

I do not suppose that any one will accuse Dr. Thomson or Dr. Milligan of being Tories. I have the pleasure of an acquaintance with Dr. Milligan and I regard him as a very fine man, but a great Liberal and I am informed that D. E. Thomson is quite as strong a Liberal as Dr. Milligan.

Whereas it is of vital importance to Canada that the new provinces about to be established shall be left free to shape their own educational policy in accordance with the needs of the future, as these shall develop;

MR. U. WILSON.

Be it therefore resolved, that this meeting emphatically protests against the enactment of section 16 of the present Autonomy Bills, or any other provisions inconsistent with their constitutional freedom in this regard;

Be it further resolved, that, since the electors have had no opportunity to pass upon the principle embodied in the school clauses of the Bills now before parliament, the government should:

- (a) Abandon the clauses, or
- (b) Appeal to the country on the measure, or
- (c) Defer action entirely until after the next general election.

And be it ordered that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Honourable the Prime Minister and to the city members of the House.

That is, in my judgment, a pretty strong resolution to be passed at a public meeting by reformers. I do not care whether they were reformers or not, they were citizens of this country, but the men who moved and seconded this resolution were reformers beyond all doubt. Then, there was Mr. Willison, the editor of the 'News,' a great admirer in other days of the present Prime Minister. He wrote his life and, I have no doubt, he gave him as favourable a character as could well be given. I do not wish to detract from it but if he writes another volume it will be a very different volume from those which he has written. I have here quite a number of extracts. I have an extract from a statement of the Hon. David Mills, who was the great constitutional authority of this House at one time and who afterwards occupied a seat on the Supreme Court bench. I have another from a statement by Sir Louis Davies, once a prominent member of the Liberal party in this House, and who has also been elevated to the Supreme Court bench. Both of these gentlemen tell us that when the time comes to create provinces in our great Northwest that will be the time for them as provinces to initiate their own school system. I will not detain the House by reading all of these quotations, but there are one or two that I cannot refrain from giving. My time is about up and I do not intend, as the speeches have generally been long, to follow the bad example that has been set on both sides of the House. This is a comment by the Toronto 'News' of 11th March, 1905:

The remedial legislation of 1896 had some warrant in the constitution; the present legislation has none. It is a gratuitous seeking for trouble which could easily be avoided.

That the antagonism to forcing separate schools on the west should come from Liberal sources can easily be understood. The Liberal party is threatened with a far greater disaster than loss of power. It is threatened with the loss of the principles to which it owes its vitality.

The measures now before the people were not in issue in the general election, and parliament has no popular mandate to place them on the statute-book.

I daresay this was written by the gentleman who wrote the life of the Rt. Hon. Sir