

(Mr. Bourassa) against the Orange Association of Canada. That association does not require any defence at my hands. But when that hon. gentleman thought it his duty to cast reflection upon the Orange Association, already numbering about 400,000 members, and those not now affiliated, I thought that some slight reference to the association, though it may seem a little beside the question, may be in order. I turn up the Act to incorporate the Grand Orange Lodge of British America, which was assented to on April 24th, 1890. Among the names of the corporators are those of the late Hon. N. Clarke Wallace, the late Edward F. Clarke and other leading men. I have looked very briefly over the clauses of this Act of incorporation of the Grand Orange Lodge of British America to see if any special favours had been given to the association by this parliament. I find that no special favours were given—this is simply a Bill permitting the members of the association to organize, to hold property and to take care of their own rights, and to extend those rights to every other loyal citizen in Canada, whatever his creed may be. And I have here a copy of the Orange constitution, which I will be glad to send to my hon. friend from Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), for evidently he has not looked into this document before venturing upon the statements which he made this afternoon. This constitution is open to every man in Canada, and from beginning to end there is no clause in it that interferes with the rights and privileges of any class of people in this country. I think it does not come with a good grace from the hon. gentleman to cast reflection upon this important body. Other references were made to the Orange Association a few days ago, one by the right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I thought I would try to learn what part the Orange Association has taken in the agitation since this Bill was introduced on the 21st of February last. The hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), who holds the highest position in the gift of the Orange Association in Canada, felt it to be his duty to sound a note of warning to the Canadian people, and he issued this letter and sent it to the different Orange Associations throughout the Dominion:

Ottawa, February 16th, 1905.

Dear Sir and Brother,—

We believe an effort is about to be made to impose separate schools for all time on the people of the new provinces, now being established in the Northwest Territories. It behooves every lover of liberty, and especially every Orangeman, to lend a helping hand, to prevent this injustice being perpetrated on a liberty-loving people. Being comparatively weak and helpless they must largely depend on others to fight their battles for them.

The effort made in 1896 to compel Manitoba to grant separate schools nearly drove the people of that province into rebellion, and had it not been abandoned, would doubtless have resulted in serious consequences. In view of this, is it

not little short of criminal folly to attempt to deprive the people of these new provinces of the right to control their own educational affairs as to them seems best. I would suggest that every member of our order lend a helping hand to prevent this outrage by writing or wiring and getting others to do so as well, the member for his constituency to oppose any legislation or enactment for that purpose. If we speak out freely and do our duty no government would dare to disobey our request. Brethren, let us do our duty; also get accompanying blank petitions signed by all friendly to our cause, giving name and occupation in every case, and forward to me to House of Commons post office, Ottawa, at earliest possible date.

T. S. SPROULE.

I shall also read the petition sent out which is referred to in this letter:

To the Honourable the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, in parliament assembled:

We, the undersigned electors of the electoral division of do pray that in granting provincial autonomy to the Northwest Territories the Dominion parliament will not by any enactment or otherwise withhold from the newly created provinces full and unrestricted freedom of action in all matters affecting the establishment, maintenance and administration of schools—

That is the document sent out by the hon. gentleman who holds a distinguished position as head of the Orange Association, and I would like to ask any hon. gentleman on either side of the House what objection he could take to the statements either in the letter or in the petition. These petitions have been returned, signed not by Orangemen altogether, but by hundreds and thousands of electors of Canada not all Liberal-Conservatives, but very many of them Reformers who supported this government at the last election. The petitions have been presented from both sides of the House entering protest against the educational clauses contained in the Bill.

Leaving the educational question for a moment, clause 20 of the Bill reads thus:

The Dominion lands in the said province shall continue to be vested in the Crown and administered by the government of Canada for the purposes of Canada.

I was wondering what the hon. gentleman representing western constituencies would think about that clause, a clause which says that the provincial governments of these two territories cannot control their lands, but that the lands shall be controlled by the parliament sitting at Ottawa. I therefore looked up the records of some of these hon. gentlemen. The hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) speaking in the debate of October 13, 1903, on a resolution moved in this House by the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) for provincial autonomy for the Northwest Territories made this statement at page 13892 of 'Hansard' of 1903: