

AUTONOMY, PROVINCIAL, IN THE NORTH-WEST—*Con.*

*Sifton, Hon. Clifford (Brandon)*—*Con.*

B. N. A. Act—3115. Surely we are not going to allow the provinces to settle this question by a long course of litigation, turmoil and dispute—3116. I have not the least doubt in the world of our constitutional capacity to do it under the B. N. A. Act of 1871—3117. If we can do one thing, we can do the other; if we can change a subsection, then we can take a subsection out—3118. Now, what are we going to do? We are face to face with an absolutely irreconcilable state of affairs—3119. You cannot make a political-religious issue of these questions, either for the House or the Dominion of Canada—3120. The question is, how far a man is justified in compromising his opinion for the purpose of preventing a political crisis—3121.

*Sinclair, J. H. (Guysborough)*—5121.

A great calm has come over the opposition benches—5121. A change of heart amongst many of them on this question—5122. Falsehoods in the 'World' and 'News'—5123. Not apologized for or corrected—5124. There is not the slightest foundation for any of the statements—5125. There must be some compromise on a question of this sort—5126. Borden does not like the position he is in—5127. We are establishing a national system of public schools—5128. Reasons why he intends to support the Bill—5129-30-31.

*Sproule, T. S. (East Grey)*—2990.

Laurier expressly claimed that it was binding—2990. Does Fielding think that the people of the Northwest Territories would be less liberal than the people of Nova Scotia?—3004. I do not propose to endeavour to enlighten the House upon any legal points involved—3010. We thought it was a provincial autonomy Bill, that had to do with the establishment of two provinces in the Northwest Territories—3011. Laurier conjured up again recollections of the various fights on religious issues that formerly prevailed—3012. If I understand the English language, this measure is above all things an interference with provincial rights—3013. So Laurier argues that because they have denominational schools by law in the Northwest Territories at this time—3014. Which he calls the union, he is obliged under the constitution to provide for the continuation of the system of separate schools—3015. The father of the Bill says that the constitution compels him to do what he now proposes—3016. The whole argument of Laurier was, I am doing something because I am compelled to do it—3017. Unfortunately, I did not keep a copy of them, otherwise I would be able to hand them to Fitzpatrick—3018. Is it not exactly that very same thing, that you are endeavouring to interfere with and abridge the rights of these legislatures?—3019. Are we going to disregard the rights of this large minority? I say no; we never intended

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to disregard them—3020. Why does he depart from that safe and correct rule, that truism that he laid down in 1896?—3021. It was never intended that the federal parliament should infringe on the subjects assigned exclusively to the provincial parliament—3022. Whenever this parliament is legislating in regard to education, it is infringing on the rights of the provinces—3023. The principle upon which the financial arrangements are based is almost sure, in my judgment, to create dissatisfaction—3024. Nowhere does it contain a provision that we may legislate with regard to what educational system a new province must have—3025. The educational clauses in this Bill are purely an interference, in my judgment, with provincial rights—3026. Can it be said that we are granting them full provincial autonomy when we interfere with their right to deal with education?—3027. Is it proper to interfere with the rights of these provinces in the matter of education?—3028. If we try to keep education free from the control of the same church, is it to be said that we are fanatics?—3029. Above all, are we to be blamed for doing what five out of the seven provinces of the confederation are doing to-day?—3030. This Bill proposes to hand it over to one church. My contention is that no church should be allowed to control it—3031. It is a reunion of the church and the state by which education will be handed over to church control—3032. Do not bind them with a chain that prevents them from doing what the constitution says they have a right to do—3033. I say this demand comes only from the clergy and the people of Quebec—3034. Why is it that separate schools can never be worked out successfully in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories?—3035. I never voted to my knowledge on that question. If the question had been raised, I would have voted against it—3036. I can tell Brodeur that he is astray. I never voted for that—3037. There have been presented to this House from all parts of Canada a large number of petitions against the educational clause—3038. I have letters in my possession drawing attention to the fact that the names of many Roman Catholics are on these petitions—3039. We are told that we have separate schools in Ontario and Quebec, and that everybody is satisfied with them—3040. I am only telling him what the Huntingdon 'Gleaner' thinks has been the result of their divided education—3041-2. At a sacrifice? I have never gone into that phase of the question or perhaps I could give the information—3042. For that reason, I am supporting what I believe to be a national school system—3043. The government dare not test public opinion any where west of Lake Superior, or even in Ontario—3044. Our motto to-day is 'Hands off the Twins, do not interfere with their rights.' Provincial rights are sacred and inalienable—3045. I based my argument upon the