

Educational History

open the door to sectarian aggression and at the same time would leave the people helpless for all time under a system which they had never inaugurated in the first place. On the other hand, Sir Wilfrid Laurier contended that the Roman Catholics should be protected in the rights they had enjoyed under the Act of 1875, and asserted that many had gone to the West under the impression that they were to have their own schools. The debate in the House of Commons was long and spirited.

Mr. (Now Sir Robert) R. L. Borden, leader of the Opposition, moved that the matter be left to the new provinces, and based his position on the constitutional argument. Outside the House the discussion was equally active. The *Toronto Globe*, the leading Liberal paper of Canada, at first strongly opposed the Government on the ground of provincial rights, and the *Toronto News*, ably edited by Mr. J. S. (now Sir John) Willison, the biographer of Laurier, took a strenuous position in favor of popular rights, and urged that the Liberal leaders were deserting the most fundamental principle of their party. In answer to a question, Mr. Christopher Robinson, one of the highest legal authorities in Canada, held that the Dominion Government were under no necessity to pass the educational clauses in the Autonomy Bill. Professor Goldwin Smith, eminent as a constitutional authority, wrote