

power to amend) in order that litigation might be prevented — in order that no question might arise as to the rights of the minority. Before these words were cold upon the lips of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and of his friends and followers, Mr. Scott and Mr. Lamont, the latter gentlemen, by a solemn legislative resolution, declared their intention of promoting litigation to nullify the very educational clauses which they themselves had brought into force.

I have honestly endeavoured to place before you my attitude on this great question. It is the attitude of the Conservative party not only in 1905 but in 1896 and in 1872. In 1896 the Conservative Government staked everything upon its adherence to the constitution, and to the remedies which in its opinion were afforded under the constitution to the minority of Manitoba. In 1872 Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George Cartier declined to interfere by disallowance of the New Brunswick School Act, because under the terms of the constitution the right to legislate in respect of such matters was committed to the provinces. The language of Sir John A. Macdonald on that occasion is worthy of note. He said:—

“ In the matter of the Bill now in question, the sole matter which presented itself to the Government was whether according to the British North America Act, 1867, the legislature of New Brunswick had exceeded its powers.”

He then laid down the principles upon which the Dominion Government should interfere—where there had been an excess of jurisdiction and where the action of the provincial legislature might be injurious to the interests of the whole Dominion. And after pointing out to the Catholics of New Brunswick that their true remedy was by the work which they could accomplish and the influence which they could exercise at the polls, he continued as follows:—

“ The Government of the Dominion could not act, as they would have been guilty of a violent wrench of the constitution if, because they might hold a different opinion, they should set up their own judgment against the solemn decision of a province in a matter entirely within the control of that province. The constitution which had hitherto worked so easily and so well could not survive the wrench that would be given if the Dominion Government assumed to dictate the policy or question the action of the legislatures of the different pro-