

this subsidy to allow the farmers of Australia to send their mutton, butter and other products into Canada, chiefly into British Columbia, to compete with the mutton, butter and other products of our farmers. I cannot understand how gentlemen, like the members of the government, who proclaim themselves to be the farmers' best friends, can justify such action as that.

The next matter of which the address speaks is the Manitoba school question. I regret that I shall feel obliged to deal with that somewhat in detail, but before I express my own views on the subject I may be pardoned if I refer briefly to the speech, made yesterday by the hon. gentleman from Shell River. That hon. gentleman made a very eloquent and valuable speech, as he always does, but he laid down some propositions with respect to constitutions and to the school question which certainly possessed the merit of novelty. The hon. gentleman, for one thing, laid down the proposition that because in 1870, when the Manitoba Act was passed, the Red River settlement was included within very narrow limits and had a very small population, therefore, when the limits of the province were greatly widened, and when the population had greatly increased, the province was not to be bound by the constitution which had been formed for it in its infancy. The hon. gentleman did not carry that argument any further. He limited that condition of things to this school matter alone. The same logic would apply to every other provision in the Manitoba Act. If Manitoba, now that she has outgrown her swaddling clothes, is not to be bound by the provisions in the constitution with respect to the school law, why should she be bound by the provisions with respect to any other subject dealt with by the constitution? I think the hon. gentleman will find it very hard to tell why. The hon. gentleman took the ground that it was unfair that the majority should find their hands tied by this constitution framed so many years ago when the population was so small. The hon. gentleman seems to altogether misapprehend the intention of constitutions. What is the object of a constitution? It is not to protect the majority, who can always protect themselves. The object of every constitution is to protect the minority from the perhaps unwise and possibly tyrannical acts of the majority.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Not by special legislation.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Every constitution is, in some sense, special legislation. The constitution of Manitoba, is just like the British North America Act—it contains provisions almost identical with those of the British North America Act. I have not heard the hon. gentleman say that those provisions of the British North America Act with respect to schools which deal with the province of Quebec are highly objectionable, and should be got rid of, and that the majority of the province of Quebec should to-day dispense with that portion of that constitution. The hon. gentleman does not seem to understand what the constitution is for. In the United States every one recognizes the fact that a constitution is simply intended to prevent a temporary majority from doing unwise or unjust acts, or acts which are deemed by those who frame the constitution unjust or unwise. There is a way of amending the constitution of Manitoba, just as there is a way of amending the British North America Act or the constitution of the United States. An address to Her Majesty, asking for imperial legislation, is the proper and constitutional way to go about it. I do not propose to deal with the merits of the separate school question. The hon. gentleman spoke as though the fact that the minority had separate schools was a grievance to the majority. Inasmuch as the minority numbered altogether only 20,000, surely the fact that they had their own separate schools could not very much effect the 200,000 people outside. There is no tyrannizing by the minority over the majority. Then the hon. gentleman told us that the minority had no grievance. I think he said that distinctly, that the Manitoba Act of 1890 had not done the minority any injury.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—I do not think you will find that in my speech.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Substantially, yes. I understood the hon. gentleman to take that ground—that the minority had no grievance. I am within the judgment of the House. Now, I turn to the decision of the Privy Council delivered by the Lord Chancellor; and I may observe, hon. gentlemen, that