

did not perceive this distinction. Perhaps he does not yet agree with me, and then I am mistaken. My impression is clear that the dispensation which affects merely the relation of one person to the other, which removes any objection as to the one person marrying the other, is a dispensation with which we have a legal right to deal; while any dispensation as to the mode of solemnisation, a dispensation, for instance, from the jurisdiction of Courts, is a dispensation with which the Local Legislatures have got to deal. I think it is well that we have had this discussion to-night, and it would be well to have further discussion on this important matter before it is finally disposed of. Some suggestions have been made that this Bill should be referred to a Special Committee to deal with. But I think it would be better for the hon. mover of the Bill, with the consent of the House, to move the adjournment of the debate, and let us, when convenient, take it up for further consideration. Some hon. members on both sides of the House seem to think that there is no social objection whatever to the passage of such a measure. I am satisfied that a great many other hon. members differ widely from that view; that even those who do not think the religious objection to be valid are, notwithstanding, strongly of opinion on other grounds that it is not desirable to encourage the formation of alliances of this kind. The learned discussions respecting the meaning of that particular passage in the Scriptures I think the Catholics are willing to leave entirely to the hon. gentlemen belonging to the Church of England, and to others, to settle among themselves. For us, all that is simply a matter of literary curiosity. We hear now that, for centuries, there has been a great mistake as to the meaning of that particular passage; that later commentators, men who have acquired a more profound knowledge of the Hebrew, or the Syraic, to-day declare that the old translation, and consequently the interpretation of that particular passage of the Holy Scriptures, was founded on an erroneous idea of the meaning of the words used in the original. That may be quite correct, but that does not at all affect us in arriving at a decision upon this subject. I speak, of course, of the Catholic mem-

bers of the House. The whole matter is an exceedingly difficult one to deal with. I am satisfied many hon. gentlemen in this House feel a strong objection to passing any Act of Parliament, the operation of which will be made dependent on the decision of ecclesiastics of any particular Church or denomination. We quite understand how strong an objection they may have to that, and I think that we ought to discuss the matter in every point of view in this House. The Bill is a very short one, but it is one of the most important in its character and consequences that has been submitted to this Parliament since its creation.

MR. HOUDE moved the adjournment of the debate.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD: I think the hon. gentleman is quite right in moving the adjournment of the debate. It is a matter of great importance, and our attention has been called to so many interesting considerations that it is well to take time to think them over and consider them on another occasion.

Motion agreed to and Debate adjourned.

March 4th, 1880.

SECOND READING.

House resumed the adjourned debate on the second reading of the Bill and the amendment (Mr. Thompson, Haldimand): "That the said Bill be not now read the second time, but that it be read the second time this day six weeks."

MR. HOUDE: Mr. Speaker, if this Parliament was the only legislative body in the country, the only one competent to discuss questions respecting marriage, my position in regard to the proposed law of the hon. member for Jacques Cartier would be slightly different from that which I think myself bound to take on the present occasion. It is not that I am opposed to this measure; on the contrary, I approve of its principle, and will vote for its second reading. My objections have only reference to the details. I recognise the motive which has induced my hon. friend to include in his Bill provisions whose expediency I intend to discuss; he has by their means no doubt desired to allay the fears of the members