

him, and the complaint which was made was that the government of Manitoba—I speak here in the presence of the members of the government—had adopted legislation which, instead of improving public schools in the country, imposed upon them Protestant schools, and that they were bound to send their children to Protestant schools. In the other, the government of Manitoba denied the statements *in toto*.

Here was the contradiction again, the same as in the House of Commons, and the question seemed to turn in his mind on whether the schools established under the Act of 1890 were Protestant schools or secular schools.

Hon. Mr. O'DONOHUE—Is the right in question here not a Canadian right rather than a provincial right?

Hon. Mr. ANGERS—A Dominion right.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I understand my hon. friend to say it is not a provincial right but a Canadian right.

Hon. Mr. O'DONOHUE—Yes.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Mr. Laurier seems to be of a different opinion, because he qualifies all he says on the subject by saying he is a firm believer in provincial rights.

Hon. Mr. O'DONOHUE—He may be an advocate of provincial rights and make that announcement, but the right under discussion is not a provincial right.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I do not know how my hon. friend may view it, but I am speaking of how it was viewed by the Hon. Mr. Laurier. I am dealing entirely with the opinions expressed by the Hon. Mr. Laurier, and he says he is a firm believer in provincial rights; and I was going to read a little further:

I said to the government of the Dominion here is a simple question of fact, you have to determine whether the statements are true or not. But instead of doing that, they went on appealing to the courts and evading the question.

Mr. Laurier put it on the question of the provincial rights and it pervades the whole of his remarks, and he does not fail to characterize how great the outrage would be in his mind if the minority were forced to attend Protestant schools. He does not hesitate to say how great he would regard the outrage; but, does he say that this Parliament should

come in and interfere. Nothing of the kind. He says:

I will be prepared to go before the people of Manitoba and tell them such legislation should not stand. I have nothing more to say in Winnipeg than I have said on the floor of Parliament, in Quebec and elsewhere.

The remedy of Mr. Laurier was not a remedy such as the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council have decided it is proper to give, but he started out by declaring that he was in favour of provincial rights, and the fair meaning of his language was that he would not pass any law, but he would go personally and use all the influence he possessed with the people of Manitoba and the legislature of Manitoba, his political friends. I hope the hon. gentleman is doing that, and that he his using his influence with them in this matter. At all events, I say he is not, by the public attitude he is taking, helping in any way towards a fair solution of this difficulty.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—I would ask the hon. gentleman if the minority have been forced to attend Protestant schools?

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I do not think that is a question which affects the discussion at all. The schools that were guaranteed to the minority were separate schools, and it is well known that our Roman Catholic friends entertain objections to secular schools as well as Protestant schools, and Mr. Laurier was beating about the bush, and the difficulty does not lie in the place where he was putting it. It lay in another point altogether. In speaking in the House of Commons the other day, the hon. gentleman has put himself on record again on this question:

But I have only this to say and to repeat that I have no desire to create political capital out of this question. I have no desire to get into power through it, if the government solve it as they should, but I am not ready to offer advice to the advisers of His Excellency. I shall wait until they bring in their message.

Now, from the extracts I have already read, it will be found that, up to the time that the government passed the remedial order and up to the time that the decision of the Privy Council was rendered, the hon. gentleman, as leader of the party, declared that the government treated him very badly, treated his friends badly because they had tied this question up in the courts and prevented them from taking a manly and courageous stand