

Mr. SPROULE. I was interrupted by an hon. gentleman opposite and now this hon. member has not the courtesy to allow me to answer his own friend. I said if there was any force in the argument that there were no petitions from that country asking that the French language be made official, that argument is equally strong with regard to separate schools because there is not a petition asking that separate schools be made permanent in that country. A good deal has been said about the Bill of Rights to-night, and I do not think it is necessary for me to refer to it.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. SPROULE. My views were expressed very closely by the Prime Minister himself. I was rather inclined to think his sentiments to-night were not quite in accord with some sentiments I have heard him utter before in this House. I tried to hunt them up hurriedly, but have not succeeded in finding them. Perhaps I can do so later. I am glad to see that he is with me because I think he is now in the right track and I agree with him and am glad to do so. There is no need in the world for any people, whether French or any other people, to have French made official. If the French become strong enough they have sufficient national characteristics to make their language permanent.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Hear, hear.

Mr. SPROULE. I said that after I had been a few years down here that there was one nationality that would down the Scotch. The Scotch seem to have a preponderating influence in their nature as a nationality, so that if they inter-marry with other nations the Scotch seem to always turn up as the dominant element.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. SPROULE. But I found that when I came down here that if there was a union between the Scotch and the French the French would in every case become the dominant element; it was the French language that prevailed and the Gaelic that went into oblivion. In view of that you can safely trust the French whenever they plant themselves in any part to perpetuate their language without its being made the legal language.

Mr. BRODEUR. I wish to make a few remarks with regard to the motion of my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk). I am somewhat surprised to see the terms used by my hon. friend in his motion. I think that it would not be advisable to restore what was abolished in 1892. My hon. friend knows very well, and he has shown it in his speech, that in 1890 a motion was made before this House declaring practically that the Northwest Territories legislatures would have the right to abolish

Mr. A. LAVERGNE.

the French language in the proceedings of the legislative assembly.

Mr. MONK. No, I do not know that. What the statute of 1890 said was that the legislature after the next election could regulate its proceedings if it thought fit.

Mr. BRODEUR. I suppose it comes to the same thing. There is no use our playing on words with regard to that. It is very plain to me that the object of this motion, the object of the law which was passed in 1891, was that the local legislature would have the right to deal with that question and to decide how its proceedings should be published. This gave to the legislature the right to declare whether the French language would continue to be an official language in the records or in the proceedings of the legislature or not. I suppose my hon. friend will not dispute that fact? I will go further. I do not know whether the statement has been made before or not, but I say that in the proceedings of the assembly in 1892 a resolution was moved by Mr. Haultain to the following effect:

That it is desirable that the proceedings of the legislative assembly shall be recorded and published hereafter in the English language only.

We are face to face with the statement that in 1877 the French and English languages were to be the official languages in the Northwest Territories. I will explain in a few minutes how that resolution came to be incorporated in the Bill of 1877. Dealing now with what happened in 1890, I find that then and there it was decided that the local legislature should be absolutely free to decide how the records, how the proceedings of the legislative assembly should be recorded, and we find also that in January, 1892, as I have just mentioned, on motion of Mr. Haultain, the English language was declared to be the only official language in the records and proceedings of the legislative assembly. Now, this is a settled question as far as this parliament is concerned. It is a question over which it would not be advisable to try to do what was done in 1890. But what is my hon. friend proposing? Is he proposing to declare that the English and French languages will be forever the official languages in the Northwest Territories? No, he simply says we are going to declare that the English and French languages shall be official languages, but next year, after a few months, six months from that time, the legislative assembly would have the right to declare whether the French language would continue to be an official language or not. Why not take a bold position? Why should my hon. friend, if he wants to restore the French language, if he is serious in contending that the French is an official language in the Northwest, not formulate words declaring that it shall be for ever the official language in the Northwest?