

longer a time for delays for inquiries, the time had arrived for action. Mr. McBride's proposition was in effect to fling the whole matter to the winds and leave it where it had been for ten, fifteen or twenty years. And the government said, Mr. Whitney said, Mr. Foy said, Mr. Matheson said, Mr. Roblin said, Mr. Colin Campbell said, and all the others said: We will have no more delay, we will not consent to a commission taking up this matter, we will accept this scheme, we will waive these objections—and Mr. Whitney filed something like a protest to them—we will waive these objections, we want the thing settled. And that settlement which was made, not between my right hon. friend and British Columbia, that settlement which was made as much by Mr. Whitney and the other Conservative gentlemen as it was by me—that is the settlement that the hon. gentleman is trying to set aside. I say that the action of that hon. gentleman was a breach of faith with Ontario, a breach of faith with Quebec, a breach of faith with New Brunswick, a breach of faith with Prince Edward Island, a breach of faith with Manitoba, a breach of faith with Saskatchewan, a breach of faith with Alberta.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Are you forgetting Nova Scotia?

Mr. FIELDING. I say the attitude of that gentleman was a breach of faith with all these provinces, and that as a public man he should have been willing to act in the interests of harmony instead of stirring up difficulty.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Might I ask the hon. gentleman a question? There was some reference made by me yesterday with regard to the Imperial Act, and I understood I was under some misapprehension, from an observation made by the Prime Minister and by the Minister of Finance. Would the Minister of Finance be good enough to explain whether any change was made in that Act in its actual drafting, and what the change was? I may have been misled by inaccurate newspaper reports.

Mr. FIELDING. If I remember right, the hon. gentleman thought that the expression 'final settlement' had been put in the Act, and then stricken out. That was incorrect. That was never in the Act. It is in the address adopted by this House. Of course, no Act of parliament can be final or unalterable, least of all an Act of the imperial parliament which is the paramount parliament.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It is the same as other parliaments in that respect, I should say.

Mr. FIELDING. Yes, within its proper functions, but this Act contains as a schedule the address of this House. The Act does not say in the enacting clause

Mr. FIELDING.

that it is 'final and unalterable,' but the schedule which is attached and which is a declaration of what this parliament wished and declared and upon which the Act was founded is exactly as it was sent from this House and it does include the expression 'final and unalterable.' The difference between the Bill as first introduced and the Bill as it was finally passed is that in the original Bill, owing to a circumstance which I am not called upon to enter into at this moment, the schedule was not included, but when the Bill was finally disposed of the schedule was put in in order that there should be attached to the Act the declaration which this parliament made that, at all events, as far as we were concerned, the settlement was 'final and unalterable.'

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I gathered from what was reported to have been said in the British House of Commons that the Bill as proposed by this government to the imperial government did contain in the body of it the phrase 'final and unalterable.'

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Not at all.

Mr. FIELDING. No, as a matter of fact we did not propose any Bill. We sent over the address of the parliament of Canada and it was left to the proper officials of the Colonial office and the parliamentary draughtsman to prepare the legislation. We did not prepare any Bill.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Did not the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies make some allusion to some change in that regard?

Mr. FIELDING. I do not quite catch the purport of my hon. friend's question.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I think that the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Winston Churchill, when he introduced the Bill or at the second reading made some allusion to that change.

Mr. FIELDING. No, we never proposed any Bill; we simply sent over the address which contained the words 'final and unalterable.' In the original Bill the schedule was not attached, but the Bill was amended in the end by the House of Lords by attaching the schedule; so that, while the words 'final and unalterable' are not to be found in the enacting clause they are to be found in the schedule which is attached and which says that in so far as the parliament of Canada is concerned it was designed to be final and unalterable.

In consequence of some references which my right hon. friend the Prime Minister made to this question yesterday the hon. member for North Toronto attacked him for what he called a compact with Mercier. The hon. member for North Toronto said that my right hon. friend had made a compact with the late Hon. Mr. Mercier to this