

the legislature, said that his opinions in regard to separate schools had not changed. He said practically this to the parliament of Canada: There is a new territory, there is virgin soil where there is no population. Do not introduce separate schools into it, do not introduce that burning question into it, but the moment you have introduced separate schools you have solved the question forever. It is part of the union and the minority will have its right to such schools.

Mr. SPROULE. The right hon. gentleman—

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Now, we have introduced into this Bill—I beg my hon. friend's pardon.

Mr. SPROULE. I am only desirous of making one observation in regard to a part of Mr. Brown's speech which more directly refers to this subject and which the hon. gentleman has not quoted.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. If that is the interruption of my hon. friend it was hardly worth while. I do not want to mislead the House. Can he find anything else than that Mr. Brown submitted the opinion that the moment separate schools were introduced they come under the Act of union, under clause 93 and that they were there to be maintained against the power of the legislature? Can he find anything else? Let him quote anything to the contrary.

Mr. SPROULE. Mr. Brown was arguing against the introduction of separate schools and he gives the following as his reasons:

He spoke in the interest of good feeling and harmony in the national councils. What else was the clause in the constitution empowering the provinces to settle the school question themselves inserted for, but to get quit of controversies like this in the Dominion, and to leave the schools to be managed according to the views of each locality? By this Bill they might raise the very serious issues in the Northwest which had proved so troublesome to Quebec and Ontario. No one would regret this more than he, and for this reason he would support the motion of the hon. member for Peel.

Which was that this clause should be dropped thus leaving it to the provinces.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It is ever the old story—none so blind as those who will not see, none so deaf as those who will not hear. I repeat again that Mr. Brown, on the floor of the Senate, did not want this clause providing for separate schools to be introduced in the Act. He stated that it would be a mistake to introduce separate schools. He said that he was opposed to separate schools, but he said that if at that time separate schools were introduced they came under the Act of Union and they were there for all time. I do not want to be offensive, but if my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) is not

blind he will understand the reasoning of Mr. Brown. That is the position that we have before us to-day. I am not here to advocate separate schools as an abstract proposition but we have introduced into this Bill the two propositions, that the minority shall have the power to establish their own schools and that they shall have the right to share in the public moneys. It is the law to-day. It is in accord with the constitution, with the British North America Act, and I commend it even to the biased judgment of my hon. friend. However, let me put a question to my hon. friend: If we were in the year 1867 and not in the year 1905, and, if we had to introduce into this Dominion the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, would my hon. friend tell me that these provinces would not have the same rights and privileges in regard to separate schools as were granted to Ontario and Quebec? Would he tell me that when you say to Ontario and Quebec: You shall have your separate schools, Alberta and Saskatchewan should be denied that privilege? The thing is preposterous. Let us rise above such considerations. In everything that I have said I have refrained from saying a single word upon the abstract principle of separate schools. I approach the question upon another and a broader ground, I approach the question not from the view of separate schools, but I approach it upon the higher ground of Canadian duty and Canadian patriotism. Having obtained the consent of the minority to this form of government having obtained their consent to the giving up of their valued privileges, and their position of strength are we to tell them, now that confederation is established, that the principle upon which they consented to this arrangement, is to be laid aside and that we are to ride roughshod over them? I do not think that is a proposition which will be maintained in this House, nor do I believe it is the intention of the House. I offer at this moment no opinion at all upon separate schools as an abstract proposition, but I have no hesitation in saying that if I were to speak my mind upon separate schools, I would say that I never could understand what objection there could be to a system of schools wherein, after secular matters have been attended to, the tenets of the religion of Christ, even with the divisions which exist among His followers, are allowed to be taught. We live in a country wherein the seven provinces that constitute our nation, either by the will or by the tolerance of the people, in every school, Christian morals and Christian dogmas are taught to the youth of the country. We live by the side of a nation, a great nation, a nation for which I have the greatest admiration, but whose example I would not take in everything, in whose schools for fear that Christian dogmas in which all do not believe might be taught, Chris-