

about a month ago was 97,000; I suppose that to-day it is or will be in the very near future 100,000. I think I can name the cities of Montreal, Toronto, Halifax and St. John, and say without fear of contradiction that there was not spent in all these cities last year \$12,000,000 in permanent improvements. Winnipeg is the third largest banking centre of Canada. The 'Financier' a leading financial journal of the United States, says that bank clearings more than anything else reflect the financial condition of a country. Well, in 1900 the bank clearings of Winnipeg amounted to \$106,956,000, and in 1904 they amounted to \$258,631,000.

I think I have given ample proof of the great prosperity of that western country; and that prosperity has come because of the sound national policy and railway policy of the late Conservative government. There is nothing that I believe more strongly. I believe that, as the saying is, right down to the hilt, while at the same time I am willing to give hon. gentlemen opposite credit for all they have done. I give them credit for what they have done to promote immigration; but they could not have got immigration if they had continued to use the doleful language which they formerly used. It was after the Conservative government had opened up the country and had secured low freight rates, that this government were able to bring in immigrants, because low freight rates are the inducements that attract people into the country.

I have heard here a great deal about Roman Catholics being 41 per cent of the population of this country. Why, Mr. Speaker, I have heard more about Protestants, Orangemen, Roman Catholics and the hierarchy during the short time that I have been in this parliament than I ever heard in my life before. This is not to me a matter of Roman Catholics. I am glad and proud to say that my best friends and some of my warmest supporters, in the town in which I live, are Roman Catholics. And I want to say further that in the town in which I live, the town of Boisbervain, we have six schools and a number of Catholics. My best and warmest political, and I may say business friend is a Roman Catholic. Perhaps in mentioning this, I am indulging in sentiment, but the right hon. First Minister spoke of sentiment in introducing this measure, and there is no doubt sentiment is a great force. Well, his little girl and mine played together, they went to school together, they had their parties together, and I do not believe that they knew which one is Protestant and which one is Roman Catholic. Yet for all that each one was true to her church. Now, I believe that that is the kind of thing a national school builds up. I am prepared to go a good deal further perhaps than many in this House. I go a long way in favour of separation between church and state. I say there should be absolutely no connection between the two. I

cannot understand how the First Minister and the Secretary of State and the Minister of Justice can support the Bill, but knowing as I do the principles of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Railways, I cannot understand for one moment how they can advocate a system which connects the church and state.

I think I have said all I need about the ownership of the lands. I believe we should own our lands. We have been the pioneers and have had to work out and solve the problem of life in that western country. We have had to educate our children under great difficulties, with schools only here and there, and the little red school was not only a school but the church on Sunday, and we went to church in wagons drawn by oxen. But suppose we had to establish separate schools for the Catholics, Protestants, Galicians, Mormons and all these other denominations, in what position would we be? That is why I say that the people in this eastern country fail to recognize the dissimilarity of existing conditions of the east and the west, and thus do not understand the spirit and feelings which we put into this question. I have no ill-feeling towards Roman Catholics. I have never had but the warmest and best feelings towards them because they are in every town in my constituency. But there has not been one of them in that whole constituency who has ever asked for separate schools. They do not want them and will not have them. A good deal has been said about the hierarchy and the priests keeping up this agitation. I know nothing about how much the priests or the hierarchy have to do with it, but I am going to show you right here to-night what men who stand high in the present government say about the hierarchy and the bishops. I know nothing about the matter myself, but will give you their words. Coming back to the school question, the word 'constitution' has been a familiar word to this House the past week or two. I suppose to be loyal we must respect the constitution; and if the constitution says we must have two systems of schools in the Northwest we must abide by it. But lawyers disagree as well as doctors, and when lawyers disagree on the constitutional phase of this question who is to decide? I have been a regular attendant during this debate, and have been a pretty close observer, and I do not know yet what the constitution says on this question. I do not know yet what difference there is between the two clauses—the one first brought down and the one brought down subsequently, and I must come to the conclusion that if doctors disagree so also do lawyers. We are told that the doctors' mistakes are buried six feet under ground. That is sometimes cast up against us by the lawyers. But I have heard also that the lawyers' mistakes sometimes swing six feet in the air, so that in

Mr. SCHAFFNER.