

fidest, too, that they, in common with the people of the entire province of Nova Scotia, will have the confidence and respect which they entertain for the Prime Minister enhanced by reason of the liberal, tolerant and patriotic stand he has taken on this question.

Mr. J. E. ARMSTRONG (East Lambton). Although I do not agree, Mr. Speaker, with many of the arguments which the hon. member for Colchester (Mr. Laurence), who has just taken his seat, presented to the House, yet I cannot help but recognize the able manner in which he placed those arguments before us. I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman when he tells us that this Bill will settle the question of education in the new provinces. In my opinion, the best way to settle that question would be for my hon. friend to advocate and vote for the amendment moved by the leader of the opposition. I cannot agree with him when he says that if a province has a sectarian system of education established when it enters the union, under which the rights of the minority are secured by law, that system can never be altered under our constitution. According to that contention any province, such as those now entering the union, although it had no choice in establishing a law such as the Act of 1875, would be compelled to abide by that law because it happened to be on its statute-books at the time it entered the union. I do not think that any such doctrine would be fair or reasonable or consistent with provincial rights. My hon. friend has told us that an attempt is being made to stir up strife in this country. He did not directly charge hon. members on this side with the responsibility, but he insinuated as much. Let me, however, call his attention to the fact that it is the government which, by presenting the legislation submitted to us, is responsible for the agitation now going on in the country. I was sorry to hear the reflection which the hon. gentleman made on the worthy leader of the opposition. He charged that hon. gentleman with lacking courage on this question. I cannot believe that my hon. friend is well acquainted with the leader of the opposition or he would not have ventured any such statement. The leader of the opposition, Sir, has submitted his case to this House and the people in the strongest possible language, and there has not been a man on the government side, even the hon. gentleman himself, who has dared to attempt to refute the arguments which my hon. leader submitted. The hon. gentleman tells us he is not surprised that hon. members should disagree on this question, and yet he would lead us to believe that our leader has not the courage of his convictions regarding it.

But, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman was not so severe in his remarks as was the hon. member for North Ontario (Mr. Grant) yesterday. That hon. gentleman made use of this language:

Mr. LAURENCE.

The only part of our population in the province of Ontario which is really excited over these Bills is the city of Toronto. I ask my hon. friends from other provinces not to do us the injustice of thinking that the blatant mob of Toronto speaks for the whole province of Ontario.

I cannot help but think that these remarks were not carefully worded and that the hon. gentleman was doing an injustice to the people of Toronto. I have no need to defend the people of that city as they are quite able to defend themselves. Toronto is well known, not only in this country but in the United States and throughout the civilized world, as composed of perhaps the most intelligent, the brightest and most progressive people on the face of the globe today, and it ill-becomes the hon. member for North Ontario to cast on them the reflections he did. In speaking of the Toronto press, the hon. gentleman called them fire brands and other names it is perhaps as well not to remember, but I think an impartial mind must be convinced that the Toronto newspapers are merely presenting to their readers the ideas which the majority of the people of the province of Ontario and the other western provinces believe to be right. He tells us that the city of Toronto is practically the only place where there is agitation over this question. Evidently he has not been reading the papers and does not know what is going on in other parts of the country. Perhaps he has not read of the large public meeting at Moosomin in the Northwest Territories which passed resolutions condemning the clause. We have had protests against the school clause from the president of the Calgary Board of Trade, from Dr. Wordsworth, corresponding secretary in the missions of the Northwest, from Premier Haultain, from Principal Riddell, Alberta College, Edmonton, from John C. McKay, mayor of Wetaskiwin, W. R. Abbott, Maple Creek, Assiniboia, John McCurdy, mayor of Moosomin, Assiniboia, and from the Vancouver Liberals. All these men and all these gatherings have most conscientiously condemned the government for their action on the school question.

The Manitoba government are doing their utmost to assist the west in not having the educational clauses forced upon those provinces. Throughout Ontario there is hardly a town but we have heard from many of its prominent men condemning the action of the government in forcing these clauses upon the Territories. As for Toronto, Mayor Urquhart, Professor Goldwin Smith and the Liberal club belong to the blatant crowd the hon. gentleman would like us to believe live in that city. Now, the measure before the House seeking to grant provincial autonomy to the Northwest, whereby half a million acres of the choice land of that great Northwest will be divided into provinces, is one that deserves our most serious consideration. Much has been said on the floor of this House