

which has just been made vacant. However, that is something that concerns him more than it does us on this side of the House. But, in view of the loss from the cabinet of the representative of Manitoba and the Northwest,—and a man regarded by many as one of the ablest members of the cabinet to which he belonged, I wish to ask the Prime Minister if he does not think that it would be well to tell this House that he is prepared to drop that clause of the Bill? I wish also to congratulate the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) who has just resigned, and to congratulate ourselves who are opposed to this feature of the Bill upon the acquisition by our ranks of that hon. gentleman and also of the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. L. G. McCarthy).

Mr. L. G. MCCARTHY. Don't call the hon. member for North Simcoe an acquisition.

Mr. SPROULE. I hope that many others on that side will find that open confession is good for the soul, and will rise and do as these hon. gentlemen have done. While I am on my feet I would like to say a word with regard to the number of copies of the Bill distributed so far. Eight days ago the Bill was introduced. Up to to-day each of us could only get one copy of the Bill. Yesterday, the Prime Minister said that there was no objection to having a large number struck off. It would only take two or three hours to strike off a couple of thousand copies of the Bill. It seems strange to us, therefore, that up to the present, we have been able to get only four or five copies each. I made inquiry of the Printing Bureau and they told me: We were instructed to give no information as to the number of copies of the Bill to be printed. It seems strange that there should be such secrecy. I would ask the Prime Minister if he knows any good reason why we should not get more copies of the Bill, and whether he will give instructions that a much larger number be printed, because there is an urgent demand for them from many parts of the country. I myself have applications for at least a hundred copies of the Bill. Yet, though it is eight days since the Bill was introduced, I am able to supply only five.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES (Victoria and Haliburton). It is not my intention to speak on this matter, further than to congratulate the late Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) on the action he has taken in withdrawing from the present government. I take this opportunity of stating that, as soon as the Bill was introduced, knowing the action that the late Minister of the Interior had taken in 1895 and 1896, when the Manitoba school question was under discussion, though I had no consultation with the hon. gentleman, I had absolute faith that he would take the course he has taken to-day. In

justice to that hon. gentleman I may say that I am in a position to state positively, knowing whereof I speak, that it was his desire that the Manitoba school question should be kept out of the arena of Dominion politics and be settled in a satisfactory manner by the province. That was the wish also of many hon. gentlemen on the Liberal-Conservative side of this House. But the wishes of those gentlemen and of the late Minister of the Interior were not gratified. I felt that there was no other honourable course open to the late Minister of the Interior, than that which he has taken, and I had the most perfect confidence in his strength of purpose and knew that he would not tolerate the infliction upon the Northwest of the clause in this Bill relating to education. I ask the Prime Minister; I appeal to his patriotism—and he pretends to be patriotic—in view of the fact that the Minister of the Interior has retired and that other ministers hang their heads when this Bill is mentioned; in view of the fact that many hon. members behind him will not and dare not support him; in the interest of the west and of the financial and commercial institutions that depend upon the development and progress of that great country, I appeal to him to pause in pressing this Bill. He cannot but know that the great tide of immigration now flowing toward that country, once checked will not easily resume its course. I predict, if he goes on with this Bill—and I am not the only one who predicts—dire disaster to this country.

An hon. MEMBER. War.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. War? Sir, if because a few half-breeds on the banks of the Saskatchewan refused to accept the new and reasonable method of survey instead of the old one to which they were accustomed, the First Minister would have been justified in shouldering his musket in their support, as he declared in 1885 he would have done, then far more would the boys in the Northwest—it will not need the boys from Ontario—be justified in shouldering their muskets in resistance to the tyranny the Prime Minister proposes in this Bill. His action, if he persists in it, will check the tide of immigration into that country and will produce a crisis in the financial and business affairs of the Dominion. I ask the First Minister to give his most careful attention to this idea. He can turn a corner as quickly as anybody can. It is not too late for him yet. Let him withdraw these clauses of his Bill, and leave it to the Northwest to settle this matter.

Mr. GEORGE TAYLOR (Leeds). I do not rise to discuss the Bill which has led to the resignation of the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) but only to congratulate my hon. friend from North Simcoe (Mr. L. G. McCarthy) on having already de-