

the term be a political question in the end. What I should have said was that I did not desire to make it a party political question, and I do not desire to make it a party political question to-day. I shall express my own opinion with regard to it; I shall express that opinion at the present time; I have not felt called upon to speak before. In some parts of the country I have been referred to as a fanatic; in other parts I have been referred to as a coward and entreated to speak out. The proper time for me to speak is to-day upon the second reading, and before I conclude I shall, I think, make my position absolutely clear. And I say, that in taking the position which I shall now take, I do not for one moment suggest that any hon. gentleman on this side of the House, following the dictates of his conscience and of his good judgment should feel himself in any way constrained by party ties to endeavour to agree with the views which I shall express.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. FOSTER. They do not seem to understand that principle over there.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The right hon. gentleman in his opening remarks adverted to five principal matters contained in the Bill: to the number of provinces, to the boundaries of the provinces, to the financial terms, to the control of public lands and to the provisions respecting education. It seems to me that so far as I desire to make any observations on the first three of these, I can better do that in committee. I will, therefore, in the remarks which I address to the House to-day deal solely with the questions which concern the control of public lands and the educational provisions of the Bill.

So far as the control of the lands is concerned, I adhere to the opinion I before expressed in this House: that the people of the northwest when they are granted provincial rights are fully capable of dealing with these lands; that they are entitled to the control of these lands just as much as the people of the eastern provinces of Canada are entitled to the control of their provincial domain. I see no distinction. One organ of the government published in the city of Montreal, an organ in which my hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture is supposed to have a controlling interest, has given utterance to a delightful piece of information with regard to this matter. It declares that these lands should not be handed over to the control of the people of the northwest for fear of the danger which might be encountered from greedy land grabbers. Well, I am inclined to think—looking at the history of the past and looking forward a little to what may be expected in the future—that we are not likely to suffer any greater danger from land grabbers under the administration of the people of the Northwest Territories, than we have suffered in the past

and are likely to suffer under the present administration. The right hon. gentleman argued that the control of these lands by the people of Alberta and Saskatchewan would probably interfere with the immigration policy of the government; he thought there might be interference with free homesteads and with the present low price of government lands. But, Mr. Speaker, may I not suggest with a great deal of force to hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House, that the people of the Northwest are more interested in attracting immigration to these splendid territories, which are their glorious heritage, than are the people of any other part of Canada.

Are they not the people chiefly interested? May we not rightly conclude that if these lands are handed over to them, they will so deal with them as to best conserve their own interests by forwarding and assisting a vigorous policy of immigration? May I not further suggest that even if there were any danger—and I do not think there is—it would be the task of good statesmanship to have inserted, if necessary, a provision in this Bill with regard to free homesteads and the prices of those lands, and obtain to it the consent of the people of the Northwest Territories. I see no possible constitutional difficulty because after all the question of the lands is not a question of legislative power until the lands are handed over to the people and become the public property of the provinces. There are hundreds of millions of acres of public lands in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Are we not endeavouring now to promote immigration to those provinces? And has the government of my right hon. friend found any difficulties interposed by any provincial administration which impede the carrying out of his immigration policy? Those lands are under the control of the provinces. The people of Ontario and Quebec go to their own provincial capitals and transact there all business relating to public lands. Why should not the people of the Northwest in the same way be entitled, when their own provincial capitals are established in the new provinces, to deal with their own public lands and exercise control over them in their own legislature? My right hon. friend has referred to the example of the United States. He found the example of that country very cogent in this instance; but when, a little later on, he came to deal with the question of education, he departed altogether from that example and presented it as one to be entirely avoided. But if the institutions of the two countries are so much alike that we may safely follow their example with regard to the lands, are not the characteristics and the religions of the two people so much of the same character that we might also grant to the people of the Northwest Territories exactly the same rights as are enjoyed by the states of the Union and by the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick?

My right hon. friend referred to his re-