

Sifton's close connection with the new provinces and his previous record on educational matters in that part of the country. Naturally we watched events with a very great deal of interest indeed, and I have been almost amused at the reasons advanced by many Conservative speakers for that resignation; reasons which showed a very great versatility of imagination. We were even told by these gentlemen that the whole matter of the resignation and of his ultimate support of the Bill was prearranged for effect. I cannot conceive that this could possibly have been the case, but it did strike me that if these gentlemen had said that the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton), who very naturally was interested in that country and who had done much to encourage large immigration into it, had taken the course he did with the object of advertising that country, these gentlemen might have been using their imagination very freely, but they would have recognized at all events the result that has actually occurred. One thing at least has come out of this unfortunate trouble and that is, that these new provinces have had a more magnificent series of advertisements than any part of Canada has ever had before. Every hon. member who has spoken has dwelt on the magnificent resources of that territory, its scope for development and progress, and out of our tribulation has resulted this good, that the minds and thoughts of all people will be directed towards the development of this rich portion of our heritage. But, Sir, while the resignation of the minister (Mr. Sifton) caused us anxiety we still were in hopes that some means would be found by which the apparent divergent interests would come together. I do not say that we felt that the decision on this question must stand between the ex-minister and the government and that we must not think for ourselves, but it was very natural that we should consider that the minister (Mr. Sifton) represented very largely one view, and that the government represented the other. And so, Sir, we waited for the outcome. At that time I presume the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sifton) did not stand alone, but that there were many other Liberals who felt more or less doubtful about the Bill, or possibly who were not sure as to the extent to which it went in giving privileges to the minority. I may say that at that time in whatever opposition I myself felt towards the Bill I did not feel so much alone among the Liberal members as I do to-night. My misfortune is that in the changes that have been made the government has rather pleased those who felt with the ex-Minister of the Interior and has overlooked that particular objection that stands in my way. However, Sir, I listened with great interest to the explanation made by the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sifton) when he eventually supported the amended Bill and I have listened with great interest to the

various speeches of members from the Northwest with regard to the character of the schools. I will not take up the time of the House in reading extracts from their speeches, although I had thought of doing so, but you will all agree with me that their speeches as a rule pointed out how almost completely national these schools were and how exceedingly limited was the time devoted to religious training, or, if I may put it in another way, how exceedingly small were the privileges granted to the minority. I am not exaggerating when I say that this was the general colouring of the speeches delivered along that line, and indeed I may say that from the evidence presented it does appear to me that they are very largely national schools, and that the amount of religious teaching that is available in the last half hour is not very great. As I listened to very many of these speeches I could not but think again of my Roman Catholic friend, of whom I have already spoken, and whether after all it was not the shadow rather than the substance which the Roman Catholics were getting. I would rather think that the claim in support of this Bill should be based, as it is based of course in part, on the actual justice of the case rather than on the small amount of the privilege given. Of course I realize that one must take some of these speeches with a proper degree of care. We know that in all bargains, if you listen to the conversation, you will think that the man who is buying is not getting very much, and yet he eventually buys. So it is like that in this case, as in the case spoken of in the good book in which we read of the bargainer: it is naught; it is naught saith the buyer and when he goeth his way he boasteth. And so I am afraid that in this case the parties on the one side speak to a certain audience and the parties on the other side speak to another audience. But if the settlement itself is good that would be satisfactory, and if the people who make the settlement have the right to do so that would be also satisfactory. The more the hon. gentlemen minimize the privileges that are given to the Roman Catholic minority in these schools, the less interest would there appear to be to take any risk with regard to the constitutionality of the proceeding. Personally I have no desire to accept the present Bill just because it gives little to the Roman Catholic minority. If the present arrangement is a compromise which gives justice that would be well, for a compromise is not necessarily wrong so long as it is not an actual compromise of principle. However, it is necessary that the proper people should enter into a compromise, or do whatever justice may be necessary. In this case we do not positively know that this Bill is acceptable to all. We find at least that the Roman Catholic archbishop, who is nearest, as I understand, to that portion of the country, objects