

to give them religious instruction if they so desire for half an hour after half past three o'clock? I represent a constituency, which, while it is not the largest in area, is one of the most populous districts in the Northwest. In my district they have 234 schools, and I do not believe there is one per cent of the people in that country who will object or ever did object to their Roman Catholic fellow citizens giving half an hour's religious instruction in their own schools if they so desire. When this matter is explained to the people of the Northwest Territories, when they understand that no change is being made, that this is simply carrying into effect and continuing the existing state of affairs that they have brought about by the ordinances that they have themselves passed and that they have worked under for the last thirteen years, when they find out that this is all that is being done, you will not be able to get up an agitation against the continuance of that state of affairs. I want to say here that personally I am not in favour of separate schools. I think it would be better if all the children went to the public schools, but these separate schools in the Northwest Territories are so near public schools that I do not think it is worth while making any trouble over it. It must be remembered that this is not a Catholic country, that it is not a Protestant country, but that it is a country in which Catholics and Protestants live together and in which there are nearly as many Catholics as Protestants, and I say that it would be beneath the generosity, to put it on no other ground, of the Protestant majority, after making the school a good school, a public school in every respect, to turn around and say: Because we have fifty-eight per cent of the population and you have only forty-two per cent we will not allow you even to impart half an hour's religious instruction to your children after half past three, before they go home. A great deal of the argument that has been addressed to the House from the other side has been against separate schools. I do not wish to make very much use of the arguments presented by hon. gentlemen from this side of the House, but I think the point made by my hon. friend from Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) is worth emphasizing, and that was that if there was any objection to separate schools by hon. members on the other side of the House, why have they not during the last twenty years come forward and had the Northwest Territories Act of 1875 amended? It was open to hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, but no, they had nothing at all to say about it, they left it exactly as it was, but now, when action is being taken in the Northwest, they come forward with the argument against separate schools, not the schools that exist in the Northwest Territories, because we have no ecclesiastical

or clerical schools there, but they bring forward all the arguments that can be to separate schools in other parts of Canada, and they argue as if they applied to the Northwest Territories, and as I said before all for the purpose of trying to get into power in this question and for no other purpose whatever. The schools we have in the Northwest Territories, I will venture to say, are absolutely satisfactory to 95 per cent of the whole population, both Catholic and Protestant. As I stated the other night when my hon. friend from West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) was speaking, I held thirty-nine meetings during the campaign. At every one of these meetings the question of provincial autonomy was discussed and a number of these meetings were held in the school-houses and at no meeting from the beginning to the end did any man, Roman Catholic or Protestant, mention the subject of separate schools. Why? Because they were perfectly satisfied with the school system that exists. Just to show the House that many of the people there are not aware of the fact that there are any separate schools—there are only nine Roman Catholic separate schools in working order in the Northwest Territories today—since the question has been up for discussion I received a letter from a prominent gentleman in my constituency asking me to vote against separate schools and for the continuance of the present satisfactory system of schools that exists in the Northwest Territories. I may say, further, that the only separate school that is in working order in my constituency out of over 200 is almost at this gentleman's door. It is near his own town where he lives. So, you will see that the school system we have in the northwest Territories is absolutely satisfactory to the people there. I know the argument is made: Why not trust the people of the Northwest? Well, I would be very glad to do that, because I think that they would not change the system we have. Mr. Haultain has stated that if he were a dictator to-morrow he would not change the system. When Mr. Haultain prepared his draft Bill what did he do? Mr. Haultain proposed in that draft Bill to give the Roman Catholic minority separate schools as they existed under the Act of 1875 and prior to 1892. He put that down in plain black and white in his draft Bill, and no gentleman on the other side of the House can contradict the assertion. After preparing that Bill, Mr. Haultain appealed to the country, and he was returned because the people of the Territories were satisfied with the school system. When Mr. Haultain passed his ordinance in 1892, he was not at all certain, (and other members of the legislature shared his uncertainty) that the passage of the ordinance did not exceed his powers. However, the fact that the law of 1892 has since remained in force