

rights respected as a hundred thousand. It is the duty of this parliament to protect the legal rights of one man just as well as those of a thousand or ten thousand men. In 1896 the Liberals stood by the principle of provincial rights in supporting the majority of the province of Manitoba, and to-day we are standing by that same principle in protecting the minority of the Territories. That minority is entitled to separate schools. I venture to say that there is not a lawyer, including Mr. Christopher Robinson, who will say that the Roman Catholics of the Territories have not the right to-day to separate schools. If they have that right, then this parliament is bound to safeguard it; and it is because we are standing by the principle of provincial rights that this Bill will pass the parliament of Canada by the largest majority that any contentious measure ever received. It is because we are standing by the principle of provincial rights that this Bill will receive the approval of the province of Ontario, notwithstanding the attempts of hon. gentlemen opposite to set the heather afire. It will receive the approval of the people of Ontario just so soon as they thoroughly understand the principles of the Bill. There has been considerable agitation created and every attempt possible has been made to obscure the issue, and I doubt very much whether until very lately the great bulk of Ontario fully understood this measure. But as soon as they do understand it it will receive their support as it will receive the support of this House, and the name of Laurier will again go down in the pages of history as that of a broadminded, far-seeing statesman and true patriot who knew what was best calculated to promote union and progress and prosperity among all sections of this Dominion and had the energy and ability to do it.

Mr. H. A. WARD (Durham). Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend from Welland (Mr. German) said that after listening to the arguments of my hon. friend from East Toronto (Mr. Kemp) he was more determined than ever to vote for the Bill brought down by the Prime Minister. I echo that sentiment with regard to the hon. gentleman's (Mr. German's) own speech. After listening to him I am more determined than ever to vote against the Bill. But I go further and tell that hon. gentleman that if he follows out his own reasoning he will be compelled to vote against the Bill also. He dealt with the legal aspect of the case, and I am bound to say that he differed entirely with every legal gentleman on his own side who has discussed the subject. He does not agree with clause 16 of these Autonomy Bills. He declares that this clause is not necessary, because the British North America Act applies. This being his contention, surely he should vote against the Bill along with hon. members on this side of the House. The hon. gentleman (Mr. German)

Mr. GERMAN.

referred twice in the course of his brief remarks to the election of the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) in Edmonton. Does he understand the complexion of the constituency? If he does not, I will enlighten him.

Mr. GERMAN. About the same as Centre Toronto.

Mr. WARD. Well, I have the figures here and about sixty per cent of the voters of that constituency are Roman Catholics—that is, French Roman Catholics, Irish Roman Catholics and adherents of the Greek church.

Mr. GERMAN. The Greek church is not Roman Catholic.

Mr. WARD. The hon. gentleman says that adherents of the Greek church are not Roman Catholics, but they amount to the same thing,—they vote solidly for the government in any event. I would ask my hon. friend (Mr. German) to explain why the hon. gentleman who was at first spoken of as Minister of the Interior, the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott), did not accept the position and go before his constituents. It is a well known fact that hon. gentleman had the first call for the position which the hon. member for Edmonton now holds.

Mr. FIELDING. Who knows that to be a fact?

Mr. WARD. Well, it was strongly rumoured in any event. And the hon. gentleman (Mr. Scott) declined that position, as I understand—

Mr. FIELDING. Who says so?

Mr. WARD.—because he dare not go back to his constituency.

Mr. FIELDING. Who says he declined?

Mr. WARD. Will the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fielding) deny it?

Mr. FIELDING. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Ward) is making the statement. He says it is well known.

Mr. WARD. It is a well known fact.

Mr. FIELDING. By whom is it known?

Mr. WARD. Why, you cannot go through these corridors without—

Mr. FIELDING. Oh, rumoured in the corridors. Well, I have heard of rumours in the corridors before now.

Mr. WARD. Will the hon. gentleman deny it?

Mr. SPROULE. Why, it was stated in the 'Free Press,' the government organ.

Mr. PATERSON. The leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) mentioned the hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) as first choice and recommended him, and after that he mentioned Mr. Scott.