

can add very little to the subject. Being a western man, this Bill appeals to me, and were it not for that fact I think I would be satisfied to give a silent vote. A great deal has been said about the importance of this so-called Autonomy Bill; some members have gone so far as to say that it is the most important Bill that has been introduced into this House since confederation. Well, I acknowledge its importance, and I think that members on the other side of the House have failed to understand how important it is to that great Northwest. I am glad to know that while the members of this House may differ on details in connection with this Bill, they are unanimous in the opinion that the time is ripe for autonomy. I believe that that great western country has reached its majority. I believe, in view of the position that country holds to-day in the eyes of the world, in view of the large number of people who are going in there to settle, that the time has come when we should give to those Territories a full measure of home rule. I readily admit the government was inspired with a very popular sentiment when it gave this question its attention.

Now, I am glad to follow in this discussion my hon. friend from Portage la Prairie (Mr. Crawford). I have known that hon. gentleman for a great many years, we have always been great friends, and he is a wonderfully great friend of my father-in-law, who always takes a great deal of pains to vote for him. I agree with him on a good many points, but I must disagree with him on others. I agree with him in his satisfaction in hearing that Sir Charles Tupper has received the blessing of the Pope. I can only say that it adds one more honour to the many honours that have been given to that great man, and I only wish that we could all receive the same honour. In rising to address the House on this question, I would like to be brief, but feeling so strongly as I do on this question, I shall have to ask the patience of the House for a considerable length of time. I am sorry to take up so much time of the House at this late hour, being a new member, but it seems to me customary to put on the new members late in the evening.

Now, I intend to deal with this question from a national standpoint. I would like to say here that I represent a constituency containing about twenty towns, in every one of which there are a number of Roman Catholics, and I am glad to be able to say that up to this moment there has been absolutely no demand for two sets of schools. I like the expression 'two systems' of schools better than that of 'separate schools,' because I think it is more applicable to the west. The term 'separate school' always seems to convey the idea either of a Protestant school or of a Roman Catholic school. I do not like to look at the subject in that way. Perhaps I

Mr. SCHAFFNER.

am wrong; I have not lived in Quebec and I have not lived in Ontario; I have lived in Nova Scotia and I have lived in the west; and when I come to speak on clause 16 of this Autonomy Bill, I prefer to speak of two systems of schools rather than of a separate school. The hon. member for Portage la Prairie began by complaining that members on this side of the House were taking up too much time. Well, we have only put up one man to every one of their men; we will not be able to keep that up, however, though I wish we could. But when he talks so much about justice to minorities, he does not seem to be so well disposed to do justice to the minority on this side of the House. Now, this Autonomy Bill contains twenty-five clauses, which may be divided into four groups, namely, the number of provinces, the financial terms, the school question, and the ownership of the lands. As concerns the number of provinces, I cannot at all agree with the hon. member for Portage la Prairie. If Manitoba was not to be extended, then I would be in favour of two provinces to the west, and I think that would meet the views of a large majority of the people in the western country. But, Sir, we are settling the status of that great country for the last time, at least in so far as the country adjoining the American boundary is concerned. And I can see no reason why there should not have been two great provinces. He says he is satisfied that Manitoba cannot be extended westward, he is quite willing that it should be extended northward. He says these lands are not much good, that they would be expensive to administer. I think that it is in the power of this government to make the division up there just where they see fit. As regards the sentiment of the residents in the Territories, it has been said that they are strongly opposed to coming into the province of Manitoba. Now, I want to say to my hon. friends opposite that there is another sentiment. There was a time when Manitoba took in Port Arthur and Fort William. We then had a territory of 150,000 square miles. If we had an area like that, we would have something like our reasonable rights. I know the other provinces are fair enough to treat us justly, in order that we may compare favourably in regard to size with the other provinces. I cannot accept the statement of the Prime Minister that before Manitoba boundaries could be extended he must consult Ontario and Quebec.

Neither can I accept the statement of the right hon. leader of the government (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) that size is not always indicative of worth. It may not be, but other things being equal I say that size is indicative of worth. If the government had extended Manitoba a little to the westward and then made one province between the western boundary of Manitoba and the eastern boundary of British Columbia we would