

to establish in these new provinces something else? The enlightened advanced intelligence of the twentieth century declares in favour of national schools, are you going back to something else? Are you going to clothe these new provinces with the cast-off and tattered garments of those nations which discarded church and sectarian schools years ago? We shall be committing the greatest of follies if we do. Our people out in the west are inured to a freedom far in advance of any enjoyed in almost any part of the world, and it is but natural that they should feel sore at being deprived of any of their undoubted rights. Why should we interfere with those rights, as we shall assuredly do if we establish separate schools in that country and compel these people to maintain such schools for ever after. These people are inured to western freedom and should continue to enjoy it. These young giants have in themselves and their surroundings all the capabilities of great development, if we will only avoid binding them with chains and shackles which will retard that development. They have in themselves the elements of great development. Surely we do not wish to retard or prevent them developing the highest capabilities of citizens in that great western country. Let them breathe the fresh air of heaven in their western freedom which is their birthright, let them enjoy the sunshine and the other exhilarating environments of western freedom which they enjoy to-day and grow up under these favourable conditions. Let their mental pabulum be the unadulterated food supplied from the national storehouse of the little red schools, and we need have no fear for the future citizenship of these people. They will grow up mental and colossal giants and be a source of strength not only to this country in the future but to the British empire. Our motto to-day is 'hands off the twins; do not interfere with their rights.' Provincial rights are sacred and inalienable. They must not be interfered with, and therefore I shall vote for the amendment to strike those clauses from the Bill.

Hon. WILLIAM PATERSON (Minister of Customs). It has been rightly said, Mr. Speaker, by gentlemen who preceded me, that we have come to the consideration of two very important Bills. From what has transpired in this House and the country, there is evidently a good deal of diversity of opinion on at least some of the points in those measures. My hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) who has just taken his seat has emphasized his objections strongly, those objections being mainly to one portion of the Bill. If I understood him aright, he objects also to another section which deals with the public lands. I did not quite catch whether he objected to those sections referring to the boundaries.

Mr. SPROULE. I have always been of the opinion that the lands should go to the provinces.

Mr. PATERSON. I understood that to be the hon. gentleman's position. The hon. gentleman, like others who preceded him, seems to have been influenced by the interest aroused in the country by what are known as the educational clauses. The House has been petitioned in reference to those clauses; there have been petitions for and petitions against. It is for parliament to come to the consideration of this question, as I believe parliament has done and will do, in a calm and dispassionate spirit, and to endeavour to give due weight to any argument that may be advanced from any point of view. That is what this discussion is for; that is how we may be benefited. In committee, of course, the educational clauses will be discussed at length. Still I may follow the example of the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), and deal largely with that subject. The government have proposed in this Bill certain provisions with reference to the matter. The leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden), in his able speech, offered a legal argument against that portion of the Bill and submitted an amendment. Not only was a legal argument presented by the leader of the opposition, but the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) also directed part of his argument in the same line. And I have no doubt that other gentlemen in the House who are competent to do so will follow that line. But upon that portion of the case I shall not trespass. Like the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), I do not feel that I should be regarded as an authority upon the subject, and I know it would be hazardous for me—and even presumptuous—for me to express an opinion; not that I abandon my judgment in this matter, but simply that I do not argue the matter before the House. My hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) read an opinion from a very able legal gentleman, Mr. Christopher Robinson, K.C. I believe that gentleman stands almost, if not quite, at the head of his profession. The leader of the opposition is also admitted, I think, to be a gentleman of legal attainments of no ordinary character. And I think I am not saying more than I am perfectly justified in saying when I state that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick) is also one of the brightest legal minds we have in the country. But these gentlemen do not agree. If I followed aright the argument of the leader of the opposition, he takes the ground that this parliament has no power to pass the legislation now proposed. If I followed him aright and was able to apprehend his argument, that is his position. But if I apprehend aright the opinion expressed in the telegram of Mr. Christopher Robinson, that gentleman does not at all take the view expressed by the leader of the opposition.