

ground of their greater efficiency from a moral standpoint, as any such defence is bound to rouse spirited controversy.

The large majority of the people in the Territories express satisfaction with the present school system and are content to have the system continued. But many, believing that the matter of education belongs wholly to the province object to the Dominion parliament's fastening any system, however satisfactory, on any province, as that means an interference with provincial rights. The objection is not therefore so much against the system as against the manner of imposing the system, at least if nothing more is intended than the adoption of the present school system.

The Alameda 'Dispatch' says:

In the interest of the whole community it would be better to withdraw the Autonomy Bill rather than pass it with the present school clause, and thereby impose coercion on the two new provinces.

The Regina 'West' is a paper published in the hon. gentleman's own town. I believe there are three papers in that town and that two of them are opposed to the government on the major portions of this Bill, at least so far as the school clauses are concerned. The one paper that is advocating the Bill in its entirety is the paper edited by the hon. gentleman himself (Mr. Scott). The Regina 'West' says:

However, we may warn the government and the western members that no modification of the education clause or no compromise in its wording will be satisfactory to the people of the new provinces. The people want full and complete control over education and schools, and consequently the clauses now causing trouble should be struck out altogether. It is the right of the province, according to the British North America Act, to have control of educational matters, and nothing short of this full right should be given to the new provinces. If western members consent to and vote for anything less than this they are traitors to the new provinces and traitors to the cause of full provincial autonomy. Anything less than complete control over education and schools is not autonomy. . . . We want none of our people enslaved, but everybody free even unto the whole people. Sir Wilfrid proposes to put every citizen of the new provinces into slavery by not giving full provincial rights. An agitation for full control of education by the new provinces is, as we take it, an agitation for the freedom of Catholic and Protestant alike. We are not discussing the merits of separate or public schools, but the just right of the provinces to deal with the question without federal influence.

The Moosomin 'World' says:

In less than a week, the change that has come over public opinion regarding the Autonomy Bill is most marked and emphatic. This effect, of course, can be and is, no greater than the cause that has produced it. . . . For this state of public sentiment the onus is on Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who no doubt depended on the honeyed sweetness of his smooth language to overcome any opposition to his cunningly conceived religious device.

His coercive scheme, however, cannot obtain, for while the great majority respect religious convictions, of whatever sect they may be, they do now demand the free exercise of legislative power to deal with the education of the youth of our country as the needs of the community require, and as the interests of those immediately concerned most desire.

The Qu'Appelle 'Progress' says:

It is evident that the western members are willing to arrange a compromise whereby provincial rights will be sacrificed. The command of the west should be 'hands off, we can, and have a right to handle our own education,

The Yorkton 'Enterprise' says:

If the new provinces are satisfied with the present separate school system, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's proposed coercive law is wholly unnecessary, and, on the other hand, if the system is not satisfactory, what right has a federal government to dictate to them? In any case, and from every point of view, what Sir Wilfrid Laurier proposes is an unwarrantable withholding of provincial rights. Sir Wilfrid has been a successful leader, but it by no means follows that he will be a successful driver.

Now Mr. Speaker, I have quoted these somewhat lengthy extracts to combat the contention of the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) that the people are largely satisfied with the Autonomy Bill now engaging the attention of parliament. The hon. gentleman quoted from an interview with the Rev. Dr. Chown, in which it was stated that the doctor at a public meeting at Toronto had stated that he was present in Regina at the time word was received of the provisions of the Autonomy Bill and that there was not a word of discussion raised about the educational clauses. I shall read what Dr. Chown says in a letter to the editor of the 'Globe' in to-night's paper:

To the editor of the 'Globe': I notice in the 'Globe's' report of the address of Mr. Walter Scott, M.P., of Regina, made in the House of Commons yesterday, a statement is attributed to me, to the effect that the people of the Northwest were satisfied with the Laurier government's solution of the school difficulty. He may have been misled by a newspaper report, but I certainly did not make such a statement, as I have no means of knowing the present facts.

The only public utterance I have made about the school question was at a meeting of the Provincial Rights Committee in Toronto, at which time, speaking to a motion made by Dr. Bruce, to petition the House of Commons, the Senate and the Governor General, praying that no further steps be taken until the people interested have an opportunity of expressing themselves upon the issue, I said that I had been in the Northwest for some time during the election contest, and I could bear testimony to the fact that the school question was not discussed at all, and that the vote of November last could not be taken as expressing any opinion upon the matter.

I quite agree with Mr. Scott, as reported in the 'Globe' of Saturday, that the school question was 'not an issue at all in the last elec-