

defined by sections 92 and 93 of the British North America Act, 1867. But, if we turn to section 2 of this Act we see that such is not the intention of the government. That section, in effect, says that the provisions of the British North America Acts 1867 to 1886, shall apply to the province of Alberta in one instance and Saskatchewan in the other, 'except in so far as varied by this Act'—showing a clear intention of amending that imperial statute. If we then turn to section 16, we find the proposed amendment to that section, to say, that section 93 of the British North America Act 1867 shall apply to the said province with the substitution for subsection 1 of said section 93, of the following subsections—and then follow certain subclauses to which I will presently advert. This, Mr. Speaker, is clearly arrogating to this parliament the right to amend the British North America Act, an imperial statute; and, as the facts show, it is assuming so to amend it without the assent of any minister of this government representing the particular people whose status is being irrevocably dealt with; without the assent of the Prime Minister of that people, and without the assent of the people themselves. It will be observed that an integral part of the Prime Minister's complete and absolute autonomy, is, that under section 6 of these Bills, the right hon. gentleman retains in his own hands the fixing of the franchise for the election of members to this House. This is clearly a discrimination against Alberta and Saskatchewan as compared with every other member of the Canadian confederation. I need not recall the fact that on the occasion of the introduction of Sir John Macdonald's Dominion Franchise Act, the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) and the whole of his followers kept this House in session for a period, I believe, of about six weeks in an endeavour to force their views with regard to provincial rights upon parliament, and to show that the taking into their own hands by the Dominion parliament of the fixing of the franchise was the gravest possible departure from the principle of provincial rights. Yet, this same so-called Reform or Liberal government has seized upon this very first opportunity which has presented itself under their regime to swallow their principles in that respect; and, in this instance they are by this section retaining absolutely in their own hands the fixing of the franchise, which course on the occasion I have referred to, they in the strongest terms reprobated. But Mr. Speaker, the crowning effort of the Prime Minister to deprive the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan of complete and absolute autonomy is found in section 16 of these Bills. To my mind, the most striking difference between the Bills as introduced and the amendment by

Mr. ALCORN.

clause 16 is shown in the right hon. gentleman's attempt to shift the responsibility from his own shoulders and the shoulders of his government to those of the people of the Northwest. The Bills are based upon the Northwest Territories Act of 1875, an Act of this parliament. The amendments are based upon the Northwest Territories ordinances of 1901. The Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) in the course of his remarks attempted to make out that this Act of 1875, or, at all events that the ordinances of 1901, are the voluntary and independent legislation of the provinces. But I think, Sir, that no one need be deceived by that action of the Prime Minister or the contention of his Minister of Customs, because the ordinances are evidently only the present crystallized form of the practise or procedure which the legislature of the Northwest, as faithful British subjects, have promulgated as the means of carrying into effect the Act of 1875, and working out a system of separate schools which was by that Act imposed upon them; in the same manner as any court charged with the administration of an Act of parliament would endeavour to carry that Act into effect, by a code of practice. But for that Act there would have been no ordinances. The right hon. gentleman, knowing that the advocates of provincial rights would take this ground against these Bills and show that they were based on the Dominion Act, seeks to remove the stigma from that accusation by basing his amendments on the Northwest ordinances of 1901.

A point which it seems to me has hardly been accentuated as much as it might have been is this, that both the Bills and the proposed amendments to clause 16 go entirely beyond the Act of 1875. That Act provided for the introduction of the principle of separate schools into the Northwest, for their maintenance by the taxes of their supporters and for the freedom of these supporters from liability to taxes for maintenance of public schools; but that Act did not provide for a division of the public moneys devoted to education. In 1879, the re-enactment of the Dominion Lands Act in that year named 'public schools' as the recipients of the school funds from the Dominion Lands in Manitoba and the Territories. Before that date, in former re-enactments, the statutory provision was that such moneys should be devoted simply to 'education.' In that year the word 'education' was struck out and the words public schools inserted. In the measure now before the House we have embodied the Northwest ordinances of 1901 by which the legislature and people of the Northwest Territories voluntarily divided the public moneys originally devoted to education among public and separate schools. This voluntary act of the