

one-hundredth part of perfection, as perfection is described by the gentlemen who oppose this Bill. I think, Sir, that no one will deny that this is just about as close to perfection as can be attained. If a man, no matter whether he be a lawyer, a physician, or a member of the House of Commons, gets within one-twelfth of a hundredth part of perfection in doing his duty he is very close to the real thing. I can tell you, Sir, that it would be weak in us and it would be shirking our responsibility, if the parliament of Canada when passing these Autonomy Bills did not settle the school question for now and for all time. We would not be doing our duty here if we were to throw it as an apple of discord into the midst of the new provinces. The future of Canada hinges very largely on the prosperity and the settlement of this new territory of ours. It will be found on examination that the expansion of trade in eastern Canada is just about commensurate with the development of the west. It is the duty of every Canadian to do what he can to develop his country, and if we can people the west with an industrious and enterprising population, then we will be helping every province in this Dominion. We have heard discussions in this House as to whether there should be two story sheds or one story sheds built on the wharfs of Montreal; we have heard discussions as to the improvement of harbours and canals, but, when you come to consider the solid facts of the case you will see that in the final analysis the prosperity of all these great undertakings must depend upon the development of the west. If the wheat lands of the west are not cultivated and brought under the hands of the tiller of the soil there is no use developing the harbours of the cities of the east. I would strongly impress upon the House that the attention of the people of the west should not be diverted from the great work which they have in hand to develop the fertility of the soil. I was one of those who for seven years took part in the fight about the school question in Manitoba. We fought there for just such a system of schools as we have now in operation in the Northwest Territories, and I know how that agitation tore the people apart, how it exhausted their energies, and how it diverted them from the work they might otherwise be profitably employed in.

It is a serious matter to involve people in a strife of this kind with one another; and, as we have the matter practically settled amongst ourselves, it would be a lasting shame on this government if it did not continue the system of schools which has proved so effective. We hear much declamation about the imposing of conditions on the new provinces; but how can there be imposition where all the parties concerned are willing and anxious that the measure should be adopted? There can be no shack-

Mr. ADAMSON.

ling where the bonds do not bind; and, as the Territories say distinctly that they want the present school system, where is the point of the opposition in this discussion? Mr. Haultain, the premier of the Northwest Territories, has declared that if he were dictator to-morrow, he would not change the school law, and he is certainly right in so expressing himself. That law is a good and satisfactory one, and I consider that it is in line with the record of this Liberal government that knowing the wishes of the people on this point, they should make it a part of the constitution of the new provinces.

I notice that the Conservative press of to-day claims that a great victory on the school question has been won by the Conservative party in Manitoba, in the division of Mountain, where a supporter of the Roblin government has been elected. I would like, however, to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Prime Minister of Manitoba distinctly stated in opening the campaign, that the school question was not an issue in that election. He made that very clear and distinct, and his utterance on that point is quoted in to-day's press. He has made a stand on what he calls the rights of Manitoba in the matter of the enlargement of its boundaries. If our friends of the opposition wish to put to the test how the people of the Northwest stand on this question, there is a very good opportunity for them. There happen to be at present seven vacancies in the Northwest legislature, and I believe it would be the consistent and the proper course for Mr. Haultain to submit this question to the electors in those vacant constituencies. He would then get his answer with no uncertain sound; and then, by calling the legislature together, he would be in a position to obtain a declaration from that body on the subject. I venture to prophesy that he would find himself in the very unpleasant position of being voted down by the Northwest legislature. The school Act of the Northwest Territories makes it very clear what the powers of the provinces are. The school system is under the control of a superintendent; that superintendent is responsible to the government; he has his advisory board, he licenses the teachers, provides their curriculum, selects the text-books of the schools, provides for their inspection, and has complete control over them. There is but one system, not a dual system, and, as I said before, it is perfectly satisfactory to the people of the Territories.

These are briefly my reasons, Mr. Speaker, for supporting the Bill, and I can say confidently that it is acceptable to the people of the Northwest Territories, and that any portion of those Territories will confirm the action that is now being taken. We have had an illustration of the feeling of the people in what has taken place in the constituency of the present Minister of the