

admirable one, and one with which the people are satisfied. We are not only doing that, but we are giving them the power to amend, alter, or change the law as time goes on; so that for all time to come they will have in the new provinces an up-to-date school system, the very best that can be found; and surely that is what every one desires. A great number of petitions have been presented to this House with regard to this measure, and a great many resolutions and memorials have been passed by different bodies throughout the country. A great many of our clergy throughout Ontario have taken exception to this Bill. At first their objections were largely to the school system that we were forcing on the Northwest; but as they have read the amended clause and the discussions that have taken place in the House, they have largely abandoned that position, and now they say it is not a question of separate schools at all, but it is a question of provincial rights. Well, when we are simply legalizing a school system that the people of the Northwest themselves passed, and giving them the power to amend or alter that school system from time to time, I would like to know how we are interfering with provincial rights. In this Bill we are saying there shall be two provinces instead of one; we are interfering with provincial rights in that respect; but in my opinion it is a wise departure to make. So far as the educational clauses are concerned, I cannot see how we are interfering with provincial rights at all, when we simply adopt the school system which the people have themselves passed, and give them the power to amend or alter it if they desire. Now, in reference to these petitions. The hon. member for East Grey has been more diligent than any other member in presenting petitions against this Bill; he has presented a great number of them. But, after all, how many men in this great Dominion of Canada have signed those petitions? In Centre York, which I have the honour to represent, there are over 6,000 electors, and in all the petitions sent to this House there have not been 200 names from that constituency, and from all those 6,000 electors I have not received a dozen letters all told in reference to this Bill.

Some meetings have been held. There was a meeting in the city of Toronto, the very centre of the opposition to this Bill, where every newspaper almost has been protesting against it, a city of 300,000 people. The great Massey hall was hired, an army of speakers was announced, whose names would draw a crowd from all over, invitations and notices and tickets were sent out broadcast by the thousand, and you would suppose that in the great city of Toronto the Massey hall would be crowded to the doors. But what was the state of affairs? When the meeting was called to order the Massey hall was not half full even

Mr. CAMPBELL.

in that great city. If there was such an excitement in the city of Toronto as has been represented, surely the citizens would have turned out to express their dissent from this Bill. Then, Sir, a meeting was held in my own county, in the town of Mimico. Two very distinguished gentlemen from Toronto went out there to set the heather on fire; they were going to discuss this Autonomy Bill, men of ability, men well versed in all the details of the Bill, and eloquent gentlemen. They advertised the meeting all over, sent invitations all around, but when that meeting was called to order there were present forty persons and six boys all told. Another meeting was held in Toronto Junction, my own town, represented now by the hon. member for South York (Mr. W. F. Maclean). A requisition was presented to the mayor asking him to call a meeting to discuss this outrageous Autonomy Bill. The requisition was largely signed. All the ministers of the town and other distinguished men were asked to address the meeting. In that town of 9,000 people, when the meeting was opened at eight o'clock, there were only twenty-eight persons, by actual count, present, and at no time during the whole meeting were there more than seventy-five or eighty persons in the hall. Then a few days ago we had a meeting called in Stouffville, in the adjoining constituency represented by the Postmaster General (Sir William Mulock), but on the border of my own constituency. I took a good deal of interest in that meeting; I was anxious to know what the people of Stouffville felt over this Bill. The meeting was widely advertised and was called by a number of the most representative people of the town, so I was naturally very anxious to hear how it turned out. I wish to read to the House an extract from a letter written to the Toronto 'News' by Mr. T. Russell Fitch, secretary of the Liberal Association for North York, in connection with it. Mr. Fitch says:

In fact this meeting which was originated so clearly with the idea of making party capital, fell so utterly flat that the promoter thereof even forgot to move a vote of thanks to the speakers he had brought here. Your own reporter who, I presume, wrote the article, stated after the meeting to myself and half a dozen others that the meeting certainly fell flat, and that he couldn't see why they held it. 'Why,' he said, 'they didn't even propose a resolution of any kind as a result of it, the only thing they did was to pass the hat for collection.'

This is borne out by the facts as, although a resolution had been already prepared, censuring Sir William Mulock and the government on these clauses of the Bill, the originators of the meeting did not dare to present the same to the meeting for the very good reason that it would have been defeated by a vote of three to one. An amendment had also been prepared by those in favour of the Bill, but it could not be presented, as no original motion had been proposed. Those in favour of the Bill did talk of making their amendment an original motion, but decided that it would be discourteous to those who were responsible for the meeting,