

government are simply bound to abide by the opinion of the law officers of the Crown and that is all there is about it.

Mr. BRODEUR. On what Bill?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The Government of Ireland Bill.

Mr. BRODEUR. A public Bill?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. A public Bill certainly. But as I have pointed out the government have duties with regard to private legislation. If the minister looks at any book on parliamentary government he will see that. Otherwise why go through the form of having these private Bills submitted to the experts in the different departments? It is in order to see that in matters concerning the public interest, as this does, the legislation shall be in such shape as will best conserve the public interest.

Mr. SPROULE. It seems to me rather strange that the government should not look at the legislation in this House. That is the object of having a government. When a Bill of this kind appears before the Railway Committee it is the Minister of Railways who objects to certain clauses and his expert Mr. Collingwood Schreiber is always there with him. He is there for two reasons; first to see that there is nothing in the Bill which conflicts with the government's policy or aims and that the Bill is in accordance with the usual principles of such Bills. The government overlooks these Bills at every stage and the law clerk of course goes over them as well. This is all under the direction and control of the government, because the government is responsible for all legislation which passes this House; whether it be a private or a public measure, it makes no difference.

Progress reported.

#### SECOND READINGS.

Bill (No. 139) respecting the Vancouver, Victoria and Eastern Railway and Navigation Company.—Mr. Duncan Ress.

Bill (No. 140) respecting the Northwest Coal and Coke Railway Company, and to change its name to the Great West Railway Company.—Mr. Galliher.

Bill (No. 141) respecting the Kaslo and Lardo-Duncan Railway Company.—Mr. Galliher.

Bill (No. 145) respecting a patent, No. 69772, of the Underwood Typewriter Company.—Mr. Grant.

Bill (No. 146) respecting certain patents of the Underwood Typewriter Company.—Mr. Grant.

Bill (No. 137) respecting the Kingston, Smith's Falls and Ottawa Railway Company.—Mr. Galliher.

Bill (No. 143) to incorporate the Owen Sound and Meaford Railway Company.—Mr. Telford.

Bill (No. 144) to incorporate the Fessenden Wireless Telegraph Company of Canada.—Mr. Telford.

Bill (No. 136) to incorporate the Anthracite Coal Railway Company.—Mr. Galliher.

#### PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY IN THE NORTHWEST.

House resumed consideration of the proposed motion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the second reading of Bill (No. 69) to establish and provide for the government of the province of Alberta, and the amendment of Mr. R. L. Borden thereto.

Mr. A. A. WRIGHT. When the House took recess at six o'clock, I was referring to the most excellent advice given by the hon. member for East Toronto (Mr. Kemp), in the 'Globe' and other Toronto newspapers, to the government to open a constituency and see whether the people were in accord with them on this Autonomy Bill. I referred also to the success which had met this appeal to the people of Edmonton. My hon. friend from Durham (Mr. Ward) undertook to explain how it was the good people of that constituency had given such an unmistakable expression of their opinion by returning the hon. the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) by acclamation. The reason was, he said, because sixty per cent of the people in that section are Roman Catholics. But if sixty per cent of the people of that section belong to that faith, and if, during the thirty long years in which they had been enjoying the splendid advantages given them by the separate school system now in operation in the west, they had acquired such an amount of common sense and intelligence as to return the Minister of the Interior by acclamation, I think that is one of the strongest arguments in favour of the continuance of that system. That system cannot surely be other than a good one which instils so much common sense, foresight and sterling wisdom into the minds of the people.

There is one factor which, I think, should not be lost sight of, and that is this. When the good news reached the city of Edmonton that the mantle of the ex-Minister of the Interior had fallen on the shoulders of so worthy a representative as Mr. Oliver, they came to the conclusion that it was only just and right that they should give the new minister a reception worthy of the occasion. And they did so. They turned out in magnificent force. Thousands of the stalwart voters of that constituency, thousands of the