

\$25 or \$30 per month. I wish to apply one other test to the efficiency of the system of education which prevails in the Northwest Territories—the amount of money that the people of the country devote to the education of their children. Statistics tell us that in the district of Columbia, in which is the seat of government of the United States, the people pay the handsome sum of \$44.59 for each child educated in the common school. In New York, the people pay \$41.54 for each pupil. In Massachusetts, a state that is a pattern and example to almost every country in the world for the excellence and efficiency of its school system, the people spend \$38.21 per capita of the children educated in the common school. In California, the amount is \$36.87; in Illinois, \$24.83; in Ontario, \$18.41. In the province of Nova Scotia, where we think we have an admirable free-school system, the people pay \$16.94 per head of the children educated in the common schools. But, Sir, in the Northwest Territories they pay more per head than in any of these states or provinces, actually paying the sum of \$50.36 on the average for every child at school in that country.

Now, as I have said, this system of education has been in operation in the Northwest Territories for thirty years. For thirty years, Mr. Speaker, this legislation has continued, for thirty years this principle has controlled the educational system of the Northwest. And, in that time, there has been no dissent, no agitation, no cry of injustice to any class or any creed. For thirty years the scruples and the consciences of all classes have been respected. For thirty years, peace, harmony, tolerance, liberality and equality—a free conscience and no coercion—have prevailed. For thirty years there has been no agitation or attempt to set creed against creed or race against race. For thirty years this great country has gone on developing and expanding, peace and harmony prevailing under the influence of just laws and good institutions. We have had thirty years of freedom, on this question, from the agitation of the disturbing demagogue or the scheming politician. For thirty years no protests, no resolutions, no petitions or counter-petitions have come to this parliament against the existing system of education in the Northwest Territories.

But the time has come, Sir, in the development in this part of our Dominion, when we must acknowledge the coming of age of these young provinces in the Northwest, and when they must receive at the hands of this parliament their final measure of statehood. Unhappily, now as in the past, this question of education in the common schools of our country with its attendant claims of religious teaching and all its disturbing contentions about the duty of the state, the separation of church and state, and provincial rights, largely, in my humble judg-

ment, due to bigotry and religious intolerance, intrude themselves again upon us and must be dealt with.

And now there is presented again an attempt to plunge this country into strife and heart-burnings over this question, but an attempt, Sir, which I think will prove absolutely futile. We have before us in the Bill presented for our consideration a clear, distinct and unequivocal declaration of policy involving the continuance and perpetuation of the existing school system which I have endeavoured to describe as it exists in the Northwest Territories, the continuance and perpetuation of an educational system which has met the wants and has adapted itself to the wishes, the spirit and the genius of an intelligent and progressive community and a contented and happy people, the continuance and perpetuation of a system of education which is completely national and non-sectarian in its essential features, the continuance and perpetuation of a school system which has in it so little of the denominational or sectarian element as to be barely acceptable to our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, so little indeed that the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) may well declare that it contains but a 'shred of the just rights due to the minority.' I myself am of the majority, and as one of that majority I confess that scant justice is in this case being meted out to the minority. It is not that measure of justice which Edward Blake declared to be due from the majority to the minority, 'a measure not simply heaped up, but running over.' If this Bill now under the consideration of parliament be a compromise grounded on political and public expediency, it is to the credit and praise of the minority that they have made the greatest concessions and yielded up the largest share of their cherished convictions in order to secure an enduring and permanent settlement of this question. The government proposition is distinctly the continuance and perpetuation of a school system which has in it the cardinal elements of freedom, the elements of efficiency and the elements of patriotism and healthy nationality, yet recognizing the convictions of those who claim and perhaps rightly claim that religious and secular education should to some extent at least go hand in hand. The Bill before the House involves the continuance and perpetuation of an educational system which, while guarding fully and completely the best educational interests of the whole people, is jealous of the religious convictions of the minority. It involves, as I understand it, the continuance and perpetuation of a school system based upon just principles, fair play and justice, at least in the greatest measure, to all. It involves the continuance and perpetuation of the only scheme of education in our country which we can hope to be enduring and permanent, and which is most likely to put an end, I hope, for ever to the shameful, painful, dangerous and needless agitation we

Mr. LAURENCE.