

lectures to both sides and he has followed it up to-day by trying to impress upon us that all wisdom is centered in him. However, we are here not to deal with his peculiar ideas, but to consider what is in the best interests of Canada having regard to the proposal made by the government for the second reading of this Bill, and the amendment proposed by the leader of the opposition. The amendment proposed by my leader may have been lost sight of in this protracted discussion, and so I shall recall it to the attention of the House.

That all the words after the word 'that' to the end of the question be left out and the following substituted therefor:

Upon the establishment of a province in the Northwest Territories of Canada as proposed by Bill (No. 69), the legislature of such province, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of the British North America Acts 1867 to 1886, is entitled to and should enjoy full powers of provincial self government, including power to exclusively make laws in relation to education.

Whatever may be the aspirations of the member for North Simcoe (Mr. L. G. McCarthy), if he is sincere in the desire announced by the ex-Minister of the Interior and by gentlemen of that school, he will be able to realize all his expectations and desires if he votes for this amendment. I notice that the hon. gentleman (Mr. L. G. McCarthy) said, perhaps without sufficient thought, that the leader of the opposition proposed that the Bill should not have a second reading. That is not correct. The amendment is the enunciation of a sound principle, it will not defeat the Bill, and it will be followed up by proposals in committee which, if adopted, will make the Bill what it should be. In a word, this is a question of provincial autonomy in the proper sense; it is a question whether we will carry out the well recognized principle that the various provinces should—subject to any conditions legally existing at the time of the union—have full authority to regulate their own school laws. The hon. gentleman (Mr. L. G. McCarthy) deplored that the leader of the opposition had not laid down a policy, and had not discussed the question whether separate schools were good or bad per se. Since the leader of the opposition introduced this amendment the debate has unfortunately drifted into a channel which justifies, if it does not necessitate, a discussion on the abstract question of separate schools. But, Sir, the statesmanship of the leader of the opposition and his wisdom in not dealing with the abstract question at that time, is evident to every man in this House, and in the country, who feels the responsibility of discussing the issue before us without inflaming unduly the passions of the people. It would be a matter for congratulation to us all, if, following the example of the leader of the opposition, and the example of gentle-

Mr. LENNOX.

men on this side of the House the question as to whether separate schools were right or wrong had been eliminated from this debate. Even the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) following in the main the same general course as his leader, although he was baited and badgered in order to provoke him into an expression of an opinion of general hostility to separate schools, he avoided any unnecessary discussion of that vexed question, and treated the real question at issue with moderation and patriotism. It is to be regretted that gentlemen on the other side of the House did not follow this example. The question as to whether separate schools are good or bad is a relative question; if in Quebec and Ontario they are good, it is because they are guaranteed by the constitution of the country and it is the duty of all loyal men to stand by the constitution. But in these western Territories where there is a sparse population, where there is a difficulty in maintaining any schools at all, I have no hesitation in saying that personally I am opposed to separate schools. But aside from this I take the ground that the matter should be left entirely to the people of the west. There should be no interference from the people of Quebec or from the people of Ontario either; the people of the west should be free to decide for themselves. We are now face to face with the question as to whether these new provinces shall, on the 1st of July next, attain to sturdy autonomy, or cringing dependency; whether they shall attain to the status of independent provinces, or become the colonies of a colony; whether they shall take their place as equal partners among the sisterhood of provinces, or, be as bondsmen to the Dominion parliament and shackled for all time to come. I venture to say that the good judgment of the people of Canada to-day, is, that whether we like separate schools or whether we do not, the right policy and the wise policy is to leave to these provinces the management of their own affairs. The ex-Minister of the Interior has told us that the people of the west are as capable of managing their own affairs as are any people in the world, and we can quite believe it. Are you going to let this splendid people come in as equal partners in the confederation, or are you going to declare, that they shall be manacled and throttled at the beginning of their career? What subtle influence is it which causes the government to say, that the new provinces shall have forced upon them onerous conditions from which the other provinces are free? In the last few days there has come to our knowledge certain things which cast a new light upon this discussion. Yesterday we had an interesting discussion upon certain matters that had arisen in connection with the extension of the boundaries of Manitoba. To-