

that constituency. I am free to admit that the hon. gentleman who represents London to-day is one of the most popular men, whether Liberal or Conservative, in that city—an exceedingly popular man. He will go back there with the prestige of a portfolio, that of the Public Works Department, the largest spending department of this government. I am not going to express an opinion as to what the result will be; but if a Conservative should be elected I am sure it will be the death-blow of the Liberal party in the Dominion of Canada.

Mr. FIELDING. Why?

Mr. GUNN. Because it will show that the sentiment of the people is adverse to the government.

Mr. FIELDING. It would show that one constituency was adverse, but what else would it show?

Mr. GUNN. I am referring to the province of Ontario.

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friend said that it would prove the death-blow of this government throughout the Dominion. That is what I take exception to. They say that as goes Pennsylvania so goes the union, but I do not think we should say of any constituency in Canada, as goes that constituency so goes the Dominion.

Mr. GUNN. The Minister of Finance knows that this is the first time that I have spoken in this House, and perhaps I have made a mistake, but I don't think so.

Mr. FIELDING. I beg pardon; I should not have interrupted the hon. gentleman.

Mr. GUNN. I do not object; although my name is Gunn, I am very harmless when properly treated. I may say that I have enjoyed this discussion very greatly, and I am glad that it has been conducted in a good-natured way. We are Protestants and Catholics in this country, and I have no feeling in my heart against any man on account of the altar before which he bows. He has a perfect right to his own religious convictions, and if the constitution of this country guaranteed separate schools to the minority, there is no man in this House who would hold up his hands more readily than myself to support them in that right. But as the debate progressed, after the First Minister had taken his seat and the hon. leader of the opposition had made his address, I noticed that the Minister of Finance in his speech, took an altogether different course. The right hon. the First Minister said he was standing on the rock of the constitution, and took the ground that separate schools were guaranteed to the minority of this country. If that were true, I would be prepared to support the government. But they have virtually abandoned that position, and I have not heard a legal man on the other side of the

Mr. GUNN.

House whose opinion is worth anything upheld or concur in the opinion of the right hon. the First Minister. It seems to me that it has been truly said by several hon. members that the address of the hon. leader of the opposition utterly shattered that contention, and I do not believe there is a legal gentleman who cares for his reputation on the other side of the House who will say that the constitution guarantees separate schools in the Northwest Territories. I desire to congratulate the Minister of the Interior on the eminent position he has attained, but I concur in the statement of the hon. member for Haldimand that Edmonton is the only constituency west of Lake Superior in which a Liberal could have been elected at this time. It was currently reported in the corridors of this House and throughout Ontario that the hon. member for Western Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) was the gentleman assigned to that position, and I feel confident without his declaration, that he would to-day be occupying it if the government had had any hope of being able to carry his seat.

Mr. SCOTT. If my hon. friend will permit me, I will give him the declaration immediately. I have every confidence that if the district of Western Assiniboia had been opened instead of Edmonton, the government would have scored either an acclamation or a very much larger majority than I polled last November.

Mr. GUNN. I feel confident that the hon. gentleman would have made a first-class Minister of the Interior; but I have not a word to say against the hon. gentleman who at present occupies that position. I have every confidence that he will administer the department satisfactorily, if the other ministers allow him to. I have made these few remarks because I think that the province of Ontario has not been treated in this debate with the respect due to that province as the largest tax-paying province in the Dominion; and if I had the opportunity of taking part in the by-elections, I would avail myself of that opportunity to let some of the people know what I have seen in this House of the conduct of members of the cabinet representing that province, who have not stood up for it as they should have done.

Mr. D. D. McKENZIE. I regret that I am obliged at this late hour to occupy a minute or two of the time of the House. When the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Taylor) was addressing the House I thought that if he were aware of everything the Minister of Justice said he would not have quoted him in any but a fair way; and I stated, when he had the floor, that I presumed he did not want to be unfair. Instead of taking my interruption in the spirit in which it was made, he flew at me and refused to listen to me at all, and thereby caused some