

undone to overthrow a proposition, detrimental in all respects to the freedom of Canadians in general.

By giving the same your earnest attention, you will greatly oblige,

Yours truly,

EDWARD ELLIOTT, &c.

I want to point out that if there is at present some agitation in Ontario and other portions of the province, a large part of it is attributed to the political friends of hon. gentlemen opposite. This is a gentleman who has all his life supported that party and who did his best to defeat me in the election last fall. I have another communication here which I shall also read. It is in more legal language :

Whereas Sir Wilfrid Laurier has introduced into the House of Commons two Bills creating the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan;

Whereas there is a clause in these Bills intended to make the maintenance of a separate school system a permanent constitutional obligation of these provinces ;

Whereas we desire peace and unity among the peoples and creeds which make up the new provinces, and desire to build up our Canadian life and enlarge our national sentiment, we, therefore, the mayor and councillors of Huntsville, in session, believing that we voice the great majority of those who have elected us, respectfully protest against the above mentioned clause and pray that the government leave the question of education to the control of the new provinces.

Signed by the mayor and all the councillors of that town.

I might point out that in 27 years that town has never given a Conservative majority but once, and that was under very peculiar conditions. I want to point out further that only two out of these seven are Conservatives and that the town is about as Gritty a town as there is in Canada, yet we find that they put themselves upon record in this public way in regard to this question. I mention this simply because it is an expression of opinion that will be found in every town, I was going to say in the province, but at any rate the great majority of towns of Ontario independent of their political leanings. I have nothing more to add at present. It may be that I may have something to say with regard to some of the clauses in the Bill when it comes up in committee, but I simply want now to place my constituents upon record, because I believe that I am voicing the opinions of 90 per cent of the residents in the district in which I live in giving expression to the views which I have, perhaps not very ably, laid before you. You at least however have been able to gather my opinions even if I have not put them as well as I would like to have done. In view of all these things and looking at this thing dispassionately I think we should leave this legislation over for a time. If the government of this country have determined that they will legislate up-

Mr. W. WRIGHT.

on the question, would it not be wise, as I said at the beginning, that we should know just what power we have and just what the meaning of the legislation will be. I think it will be the part of wisdom to do that and I ask that the government will do that so that in crystallizing the legislation upon the statute-book we will know what we are doing. As it is now we are asked to go it blind, to put legislation there that we cannot recall. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank this House for the kindly hearing I have been given during the short time I have attempted to discuss this question and I shall now make way for some other hon. gentleman.

Mr. ROBERT BICKERDIKE (St. Lawrence, Montreal). Mr. Speaker, after the many eloquent addresses which have been made by the different members on both sides of the House there is very little left to say unless we repeat, which is something I decline to do. I am not a doctor of law, nor a doctor of divinity, I am neither an Orangeman, a Ribbonman nor a Roman Catholic, but I stand here as a Protestant from the province of Quebec, representing one of the divisions in the city of Montreal, composed largely of Roman Catholics, who have no objection to trusting their mandate to a Protestant in this House. Some one has said that a flow of language is not as effective as a flood of love, that sunshine works as great reforms as thunderstorms, and I am sure that we are to be congratulated on having nothing to fight over except the best way to educate our children in their duty towards a beneficent Creator and that we should differ only as to the best means of securing that object. I wish to say that in Quebec the people get along remarkably well together. We have no difficulties whatever, we hardly ever experience the slightest difficulty in that province between the two nationalities or religions. Constant courtesies are extended from one to the other. It was my good fortune, through the courtesy of the hon. the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) to be favoured with a seat in the gallery in this House on the 13th of March, 1896. That was about the closing hours of the dark days of Tory misrule and it was my great pleasure to listen to the speech delivered by that hon. gentleman on the school question on that occasion, probably one of the best speeches ever known to be delivered by that hon. gentleman in this House or out of it. As I sat there and listened to the burning words of eloquence that fell from the lips of that distinguished statesman, to his beautifully rounded English phrases with an occasional dash of sarcasm thrown in, I felt that he had made the speech of that evening, and I would like with his permission to quote very briefly from it. Reading that speech, as I have done on several occasions since this debate commenced and comparing it with the one which the hon. gentleman delivered a few