

but if they had known what kind of a report would have been given by the 'News' the motion would certainly have been proposed and would have been carried by a large majority. I might add that the Liberal Association of Stouffville have called the Liberals together since the meeting, and have passed a resolution unanimously expressing approval of the course as to this Bill of our respected member, Sir William Mulock, and with the government led by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which resolution is being forwarded to Sir William Mulock at Ottawa.

Sir William Mulock is not here, or I would have been very glad to have had that resolution and to read it to the House. From all these meetings that have been held, and from the small number of men who have signed petitions in opposition to this Bill, I conclude that the opposition to it is not as strong as has been represented. I will venture to say that in my county, and I think in most of the counties in Ontario, if a man of the amiable disposition and the genial manner of the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) was to go around and present a petition to the electors saying that the Dominion government was passing a Bill establishing a system of separate schools for all time to come in the Northwest Territories, a system that could not be repealed, that would be as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, and ask the electors to sign it, he would get a very large number of signatures, and the fact that these petitions emanating from Centre York were signed by less than 200 out of 6,000 people is a conclusive proof of my mind that either the people of Centre York take very little interest in this question, or else that they have full confidence in the humble gentleman who represents them at the present time.

Mr. SPROULE. I would like to ask who called that meeting in Centre York that was attended by two prominent gentlemen from Toronto?

Mr. CAMPBELL. That meeting was called by Mr. Hunter and Mr. Godfrey, of Toronto.

Mr. SPROULE. Mr. Hunter, who was the Reform candidate in Toronto, and Mr. Godfrey, also a very prominent Reformer from Toronto.

Mr. CAMPBELL. That does not make any difference. Mr. Hunter ran as an independent candidate in West Toronto at the last election. The point I want to make is that no matter who called the meeting, the fact that only forty electors attended that meeting showed that there was little interest in the question.

Mr. INGRAM. The hon. gentleman had written a letter up there explaining what the clauses really meant, and the people were so satisfied that they did not attend the meeting.

Mr. CAMPBELL. That was my duty, was it not?

Mr. INGRAM. Of course.

Mr. CAMPBELL. The Bill only needs explanation.

Mr. INGRAM. Exactly; and the explanation the hon. gentleman gave to-night will be very satisfactory I am sure when he compares notes with his colleagues and friends.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I hope the hon. member is pleased with my explanation. I would like him to be, and I hope he will profit by it; and if he does, I am sure he will study the interests of his constituents and vote for the Bill.

Mr. INGRAM. Any original idea is appreciated in this House, and the hon. gentleman's is the only original idea so far.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Then you should appreciate this very much. It is something to my credit, I think, that after the subject has been debated for about a month or six weeks I can say something new or original upon it. Now, a great many people have found fault with the Liberal party and with our honoured premier for going back on their record. They say that the position taken by the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) now is altogether different from that taken by him in 1896. For my part, I believe that the position taken by the Prime Minister on this Bill is exactly in line with his previous record and with the principles of the party of which he is the honoured leader. The Liberal party has always been the party of provincial rights. Those hon. members who had the honour of holding seats in this House in 1889 will remember the fierce agitation that sprang up in the province of Ontario over a measure passed by the legislature of the province of Quebec known as the Jesuit Estates Bill. That Bill the government of the Dominion had nothing to do with; it was a provincial statute. But among those in Ontario who demanded the disallowance of that Bill, there was no talk of provincial rights. Petitions galore poured into this House. Resolutions were passed at public meetings. Ministers of different churches denounced the Bill and the course of the government in refusing to disallow it. But when the refusal to disallow the Bill was upheld by a large majority of this House, with the support of the right hon. gentleman who is now Prime Minister of the Dominion, the agitation ceased; and to-day, when the clouds have rolled away when the passions aroused by that controversy have cooled, we see that the government of Sir John Macdonald was right in standing by provincial rights and refusing to disallow the Bill. Last session we had a debate lasting a month or two on what was declared to be the most important issue that had ever come before parliament, the Bill providing for the build-