

right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) in view of all this, might I not respectfully inquire whether it would not have been well for the right hon. gentleman on an earlier occasion than that which he has selected to have made to the country the statement which he has made to-day.

I have nothing to say with regard to the position which is said to have been assumed by His Excellency Monseigneur Sbarretti. He is not in any sense responsible to this parliament, he is responsible only to his ecclesiastical superiors in authority. The only persons who are in any way responsible to this parliament are the government of this country, and I thought that my right hon. friend to-day might have gone a little further than he did go. He knows as well as any of the rest of us, that it has been rumoured throughout this country, not only rumoured but stated in the public press that there were negotiations with His Excellency with regard to education in the Northwest Territories if not in Manitoba. My right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) did not see fit to touch that question at all to-day and I suppose when he thinks a proper occasion arises he will deal with it, but in the meantime I may call his attention to the fact that the statements to that effect are being made in the press of the country; upon what authority I do not know. All I do know is this, that when statements made in a very much less direct manner, and on very slight foundation were current in 1895 and 1896, with regard to the Conservative administration of those days my hon. friend was always ready to come forward and ask for ministerial explanations and if necessary to move the adjournment of the House in order that they might be discussed.

In view of the attitude which he saw fit to adopt ten years ago, we might have expected that he would have gone a little further to-day when he called the attention of the House to these circumstances. As I said before, the matter may perhaps require to be discussed a little further. I was not aware that the right hon. gentleman intended to bring it up to-day in this somewhat extended form. If necessary, it may be brought up and discussed on a future occasion.

MR. W. D. STAPLES (Macdonald). I want to call attention for a moment to that mysterious letter of the 23rd of February. I think I can bring testimony to show where this letter went, and I think I can trace it to the right hon. the First Minister's own residence. Now, on the 23rd of February the Hon. Mr. Rogers, after writing this letter, asked me to see that it got over to the hon. the First Minister. I rang the bell from room No. 6, and there came a messenger named Julius Beaulieu, I gave the letter to him, and he said he would deliver it. He says now there is no doubt but that he did deliver the letter. Surely

MR. R. L. BORDEN.

we are living in a mysterious age, mysterious things are taking place every day, and this is one of them. I wish to call the right hon. gentleman's attention to another statement he made. He told us to-day that his memory is as fresh now as it was in his younger days. He stated that the Hon. Colin Campbell was on the floor of the House on the 22nd day of February when these Bills were introduced, which is not the case. I may add regarding that letter that I have been down and consulted the records in the messengers department in this building, which show that this wonderful letter went from room No. 6, and that it was delivered to the messenger at about the time that the messenger states, it was carried to the right hon. gentleman's residence on that particular day, and they show that it went from that particular room.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER. I want to correct my hon. friend. I stated that Mr. Rogers was here on the 21st of February, and I am sure of that; and I stated that Mr. Campbell was here also, but I was not so sure of that and that is what I said. In regard to the letter that was sent to my House, I think that if it was sent to my house it must have gone astray somewhere, because I have never seen it. I really did not suppose that anybody would suspect that I would make an inaccurate statement in regard to that.

MR. W. F. MACLEAN (South York). I intend for a few moments to refer to and comment upon the statement made here to-day. On February 27th I brought to the attention of this House the very question referred to just now by the leader of the opposition, when I read a declaration of the French newspaper called 'Le Soleil,' saying it was the organ of the government, and I also read its editorial, which declared that Manitoba was being punished by a denial of extension of her western or other boundaries because of her school laws. The right hon. gentleman repudiated all that. He said there was no intention of punishing Manitoba, and he made light of the statements I made. But since then it has come out that that newspaper was his newspaper, at least it has never been denied, and a colleague of his, according to a statement in the papers, transferred the other day a large portion of the shares he held in that paper to a senator who is a supporter of the right hon. gentleman. It has been shown by other quotations from papers supporting the government that little Manitoba was being punished for her iniquitous school legislation, there is no doubt about that. Now comes the Hon. Mr. Rogers, and his statement has been read here to-day and remains undenied in a great many respects so far as the Prime Minister is concerned. Mr. Rogers says that he received a letter from the Archbishop of Ephesus, Monseigneur Sbarretti, and there