

am still strongly of opinion that if the Catholic minority will trust to the legislatures of the Northwest, in the end they will be better off thereby.' If that is done, we can bid farewell to these discussions in this House, where different races and creeds are represented, and where the active passions, good or bad, are always aroused when you come to questions of religious belief and dogma. These questions will then no longer intervene to disquiet and paralyze the business of this country. Let these questions be fought out in the province, which is the ultimate tribunal; and again I plead for absolute, unrestricted freedom and confidence in the tolerance of the Northwest people, now and in the future, for fair treatment to all their fellow-citizens.

At six o'clock, House took recess.

### After Recess.

House resumed at eight o'clock.

### PRIVATE BILLS.

#### OTTAWA ELECTRIC COMPANY.

Mr. GALLIHER moved third reading of Bill (No. 12) respecting the Ottawa Electric Company.

Mr. ROBERT STEWART (Ottawa). I beg to move:

That the said Bill be not now read the third time, but be referred back to the Committee of the Whole with instructions to amend the same by providing that section five be struck out and the following be substituted therefor: Provided that the power to acquire shares in the capital stock and debentures or securities of other electric companies possessing powers similar to those of this company will not apply to the capital stock, debentures and securities of the Consumers Electric Company, Limited, or the Metropolitan Company, Limited, or their successors or assigns.

I desire merely to say a few words. The other day a statement was made by the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) to the effect that the city of Ottawa had violated its contract with the Ottawa Electric Company. In making this statement, I presume the hon. gentleman had in his mind the resolution passed by the city council of Ottawa some years ago. A motion was then presented in the council asking that a monopoly be given the Ottawa Electric Company, and that motion was carried. But, of course, in order to become effective, it was necessary that it should be put in the form of an agreement and that a by-law should be adopted by the council ratifying that agreement. This was never done. There was considerable feeling at the time, and no sooner was the motion carried than a notice of reconsideration was given. The following day it was pointed out by the city solicitor that it would be a violation of the common law to carry through any ar-

rangement of that kind. Of course, the mere adopting of the motion by the council could have no more effect than the first reading of a Bill by this House. There was simply a resolution passed by the council, but that resolution was never put into the form of an agreement, and it was pointed out by the city solicitor that no corporation could have any power to enter into any such agreement. No contract having been made, it is not correct to say that the city has violated any agreement it has with the company. I think it is only due to the city that I should make this correction of the statement of my hon. friend, who, I am sure, would not willingly do any injustice to the Ottawa city council. Another statement to which I wish to draw attention is that made by the Minister of Justice to the effect that the city of Ottawa was endeavouring to trespass on the rights of the Ottawa Electric Company. I wish to give that statement a positive contradiction. The city council of Ottawa are not endeavouring to trespass on any vested rights. It is the Ottawa Electric Company which is asking for this legislation, and the city council are simply asking to be guarded against any injustice. The feeling in this city is very strong against the passage of this Bill. We consider it to be an invasion of our municipal rights. My hon. friend from Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) evidently misunderstood another statement which I made. I was pointing out that members of this House, who are not residents of the city of Ottawa, cannot have the same interest in this matter as the city representatives. We do not dispute the right of any member to make up his mind as to how he will vote on the Bill, but it is only fair that the members from outside the city should pause and consider the effect which this Bill will have on the rights of the municipality. I have nothing more to say on this question. The arguments are before the House. The people of this city consider that it would be an injustice to them to pass this Bill, and I appeal to members on both sides to vote against it.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN (South York). I think that my hon. friend from Ottawa (Mr. Stewart) has made out a very good case. The more we discuss this measure, the more it becomes evident that it is a raid on the revenues of the people of Ottawa, and that this parliament ought to refuse to pass it. This parliament has no reason to occupy itself with the domestic affairs of the city of Ottawa, especially in a matter so extremely local. The question never should have come to this House, and the Bill is evidently an invasion of the municipal rights of the province of Ontario. The matter should really be dealt with in the Ontario legislature. In Toronto this Bill is regarded as an invasion of municipal rights. We have had produced here the testimony of the two members represent-