

and when I find that the legal minds in the government do not know what these sections mean is it any wonder that I as a layman entertain grave doubts what these sections mean. Am I not justified in demanding an explanation from the Minister of Justice after sitting here for weeks and weeks hearing this Bill discussed? We are not to suppose that the Department of Justice is so careless and so indifferent, that after it has framed this legislation it does not know what the meaning of it is. I say that the member who writes to his constituents telling them in glib fashion what this legislation means, (when the Minister of Justice is not able or ready to tell), is not capable of representing an intelligent constituency. So far as I am personally concerned I want to say that whatever powers we have in creating new provinces are set out in the British North America Act, and as a member of this House representing a most intelligent constituency I am ready to say that I shall support any legislation creating these new provinces which gives them whatever rights they are entitled to under the British North America Act. I will support such a proposition as that, but I will not support a proposition the meaning of which the government and the Minister of Justice will not explain, and which they will not say does not go beyond the powers which the British North America Act gives us. I am prepared to defend this stand of mine in this House or before my constituents or anywhere else. When the division on the second reading of this Bill was being taken, it brought back to my mind that in 1896 I sat here with many of my friends supporting a government and supporting remedial legislation in favour of the minority in Manitoba, whose rights I believed had been taken away from them. And after the election was over and the smoke of the battle had cleared, I found myself not on the government side of the House but on the opposition side, and where were my comrades of the previous session. They had gone down in battle defending the rights of the minority in Manitoba, and this Liberal government came into power. And to-day I can look over at the government benches, and I wonder to myself whether the same misfortune will not overtake a number of these gentlemen opposite, who in the division of the second reading stood up to vote that disabilities should be imposed on the people of the new provinces which the British North America Act does not warrant. I wonder, if some of these gentlemen opposite representing constituencies with which I am acquainted, will come back to this House again. I think not. I believe that some of these gentlemen who were so brave members who,—some of them with promises of positions in their pockets, some of them perhaps only anxious to keep their party in power,—stood up to vote for this provi-

sion with regard to education which they did not understand, and which the Minister of Justice will not explain even at this late date.

I say, in conclusion, that whatever the result may be, I for one will be perfectly satisfied with my own conduct on this question. I have not said anything offensive to the minority, and I want to say that I represent a strong Protestant constituency now, as I did before, and I could have made much political capital if I chose to do it. I could have been elected practically by acclamation in 1896 if I had pursued a different course from what I did; but I believed it was my duty to pursue that course, and if the same question came up again I would take the same course that I took then. But this question stands in a different light. We are creating a territory into new provinces, and I for one will support the British North America Act in whatever rights those provinces should have. I will wait for the opinion of the Department of Justice before I do as some hon. gentlemen opposite have done—write to my constituents and tell them thus and so is the opinion of the Department of Justice with respect to the rights of the minorities in the new provinces created during the session of 1905.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I know how exceedingly anxious my hon. friend is to expedite the consideration of the different clauses of this Bill, and he will therefore pardon me if I intrude on the attention of the committee even for a few moments. But I know also that my hon. friend is exceedingly careful of his reputation as an accurate debater and as one who makes statements which he can always substantiate. I wish to give him the opportunity of maintaining that reputation by asking him whether or not he attributed to me the statement that there were no lists in the Northwest Territories for a federal election?

Mr. INGRAM. I would be sorry to put the Minister of Justice in a false light.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Is that what my hon. friend said this evening? That is the question.

Mr. INGRAM. Last evening I asked if the Minister of Justice said that the Franchise Act did not provide for any lists in the Northwest Territories, and I understood him to say that it did not, and on the strength of that I made my statement. If the hon. gentleman will say that the statement I made is wrong, I am ready to withdraw it and apologize to my hon. friend if I made a mistake.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. It is not a question between the hon. gentleman's word and mine. I want to know what he said to-night, and what he said he was prepared to prove. I understood him to say that I had stated last night that there were no lists for