

hearing or reading all that has been said by hon. gentlemen. I have, however, read with a great deal of care the speeches which the right hon. First Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has made in support of this measure, as well as the speeches of the hon. Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson), the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), the hon. ex-Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) and the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), and I would very much indeed have desired to have read everything else that has been said on this very important subject, because, with the rest of the hon. members of this House and in common with them, I look upon it as the most important matter that has been before this House, as far as I know, since confederation. But, Sir, I am impressed by a further fact. This debate, in some measure, has drifted, I regret to say, into abuse. If there is one thing more than another that I admired in the speech of the right hon. First Minister in which he introduced this Bill, it was the suggestion that we should proceed to its consideration with calmness, with moderation and with some effort to conceive that others besides ourselves might have honest convictions in respect to this very important matter; but I deeply regret that some of the followers of the right hon. gentleman have not seen fit to approach this important question with that feeling which the right hon. gentleman so well expressed. Why, Sir, how can it be fairly or reasonably said for one moment that the city of Toronto, in which I happen to live is bigoted and intolerant? Were it a fact true, how disgraceful it would be to throw up to us that we were so ignorant, so far behind the rest of the people of this country in our knowledge of what is reasonable and just, how disgraceful that such language should be addressed to us rather than the language of kindness, consideration and conciliation? I wish to say, Sir, that the constituency which I have the great honour to represent in this House, no later than the 25th of January last, gave a majority of 2,800 votes in favour of a Roman Catholic (Hon. J. J. Foy), and I want to say also that, bigoted as we are, or as we are said to be, we have the greatest affection and admiration for all our fellow-countrymen, whether they are Catholics or Protestants, whether they are of English, Irish, Scotch or French descent. We make and we endeavour to make no distinction, and I sincerely trust that no member of this House will in future feel constrained to use any such language as that to which I have referred towards any part of the province of Ontario. But, dealing for the moment with the constituency which I have the honour to represent, and for which I had the honour to be elected by acclamation, can it be said that this constituency, which, in 1896, sent a supporter of the right hon. gentleman to this House, and which at that time sent five opponents of the coercion of

Manitoba to this House, is a constituency which is guilty of bigotry and intolerance? Of course as Orangemen and as Tories, people naturally expect abuse, but I did not think the Liberal party would be disposed to use any such epithets towards the leading Liberals of Ontario. Now, Sir, we have been told that there has been a compromise in respect to this Bill. I will deal with that later; but, Sir, if there is any compromise in respect to this Bill, what has been the lever that has brought about this compromise? Has it been the argument of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden)? Not at all. If any compromise has taken place, it has taken place because of the vigorous, united and strong protests that have come to this House from nearly every Liberal constituency in Ontario. I venture to say that in 1896 no Liberal ever got a warmer, more enthusiastic, heartier or more cordial reception than that accorded to the right hon. First Minister, when he came to the city of Toronto. Mr. Speaker, if that was the feeling of the people in the city of Toronto, in 1896, since when have they suddenly become bigoted and intolerant? If their hearts and minds and feelings were stirred with admiration of the right hon. Prime Minister, then in a constituency which, in 1896, returned a Liberal candidate (the late Mr. Justice Lount), which, later on, returned a Liberal (Mr. Bertram), and which was barely wrested from the Liberal party in 1900, in a constituency which, in 1904, with the most popular candidate the Conservative party could put in the field, was barely won by such candidate (the late Mr. E. F. Clarke) by a majority of 200, how is it no Liberal candidate came forward in April last? What was the change? What facts had intervened? The people were not bigoted in 1896. They objected to the coercion of Manitoba. What facts intervened between the election in November and the election by acclamation in April last? Nothing assuredly but the introduction into parliament of these Bills. Now, Sir, I dare say it has been quoted to you, and I do not propose to dwell on this matter at length, but I do feel that some justice should be done to the people who honestly believe that this legislation is wrong, and that Liberal members of this House are misrepresenting the views and feelings of the Liberal party in this country. I wish to read a paragraph from what was once supposed to be the Liberal organ of this province, the 'Globe' of April 19. It says:

But the point of capital importance, and which cannot be disproved by shutting one's eyes to its undesired existence or by shouting bravely that it does not exist, is the unmistakeable fact that not in Toronto alone, but in scores of centres throughout this province the sanest and steadiest and most intelligent men cannot bring themselves to approve of the Dominion parliament, on any pretext whatsoever interfering in the educational affairs of the new