

out of Dominion politics and leave it to the provinces to solve.

The Rev. Dr. Potts thus expressed himself :

If Paul could say he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, Stapleton Caldecott could say he was a Grit of the Grits. When I open the 'Globe,' as I do every morning—and in order that I may not be injured I read two Conservative papers—and see the noble stand it is making on this question, I am beginning to realize that country is more than party.

Now, I have taken up a little time in laying before this House the foundation of the agitation in the province of Ontario and the position which intelligent men take on this question. I regret exceedingly that it has been found necessary by some hon. gentlemen, in the course of this debate, to call names and to charge the people of Ontario with being bigots. I do not think that any hon. gentleman in this House will say that these gentlemen who spoke at this meeting are bigots or Tory fanatics or anything of that kind, and I regret that some hon. members have found it necessary to resort to that style of argument. So far as I am concerned, I want to repudiate the charge of bigotry directed against the people of Ontario. A large number of the people of that province sincerely believe that the educational policy of the government in respect to the two Bills under consideration is opposed to the best interests of the west. They are firmly convinced that it will be a great injury to that country to saddle it with a dual system of schools. It may be that the ideals which a section of the people of Ontario wish to attain in respect of this question are unattainable. But whether they be unattainable or not, let us discuss these things in a reasonable way. Let us not say that the people of the province from which I come are seeking to raise a racial issue. Such is not the case, and I defy any one to bring a tittle of proof to substantiate any such charge.

Before this Bill was introduced, I had received a great many letters, chiefly from my constituents, with reference to this question, and also I received a large number after this Bill was brought down. I have selected two letters from the bunch in my desk, and I propose to read one of them and an extract from the other, and what I do not read in the other has no reference to the subject we are discussing. My object in doing this is to show what is in the mind of the ordinary voter—not the ordinary professor in a university or college or the ordinary lawyer or business man, but the ordinary man on the street; and I must say that the greater number of the letters I have received come from workingmen and mechanics. The gentleman who wrote me the letter I am about to read, wrote it on the 20th February, before the First Minister introduced his Bill. And I want to say that I have selected two letters from Orange-

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men. I think our friends from another province may have an exaggerated idea what an Orangeman is. I do not know as much about the Orange Order as I might hope and I wish I knew more, but what I do know about it is nothing but good. I do not know anything in regard to them different from that. This gentleman in writing to me, says :

The Orange association does not look upon this question in a spirit of narrow bigotry, but takes the broad view that in a country like ours we should endeavour to assimilate the different creeds and nationalities that make up our population; and in no way do we think this can be accomplished as well as by a system of national public schools.

Now, I can easily understand that that view will meet opposition; I can easily understand that it is different from the view taken by many hon. members of this House. But I do say that there is nothing bigoted, there is nothing fanatical in it. And it is the opinion which prevails largely in the province of Ontario. There is nothing in that opinion which can possibly give offence. Now, I wish to read another letter which was addressed to me. This is dated 10th February, and I would ask hon. members to bear in mind in this connection the fact that the Prime Minister did not introduce this Bill until 21st February. This correspondent says :

As you are doubtless aware, it is rumoured that it is the intention of the government to insert a clause in the constitution of the new province or provinces to be erected in the Northwest Territories of the Dominion, requiring those provinces to maintain a system of Roman Catholic separate schools. Now, I do not think it can be successfully controverted that the separate schools of this province are a hindrance to its progress; first, by reason of the inferior educational facilities they offer in comparison with our non-sectarian public schools; second, by reason of the distrust towards each other which they engender among our citizens; and, last, because of the additional expense occasioned by maintaining a dual system. If then, separate schools have retarded the progress of our own fair province, how important it must be that those new provinces destined to become the planting-out ground of a great empire, should be permitted to develop into gianthood, unshackled by the binding processes which are dwarfing their sisters, Ontario and Quebec.

A truly national policy for the west would be to make all creeds and nationalities equal before the law by maintaining only national secular schools in which only one language is taught and only one flag is recognized.

As, therefore, you were elected to represent the district of East Toronto in parliament, and I am an humble elector of that district, I respectfully urge you to oppose the enactment of such an iniquitous clause, even should you find it necessary to antagonize political friends by so doing.

I repeat that it may not be possible for every hon. gentleman in this House or for some citizens of this country to agree alto-