

Interior, the Hon. Mr. Oliver. The Conservative association there passed a resolution to the effect that it would be useless or impolitic to oppose him; his late opponent, Mr. Secord, endorsed his candidature; and he has been returned by acclamation. If he had been opposed, he certainly would have been returned by a larger majority than he had before. The Board of Trade of Edmonton, which certainly cannot be called a sectarian body, which is neither Galician nor Doukhobor, but strictly Canadian, passed a resolution endorsing his candidature. I think that is a fairly good answer to our critics on the other side of the House, and I am confident that any other constituency in the Northwest Territories, I care not which it is, would give exactly the same answer. I believe that the people of the Northwest are at one on this subject. These are the reasons, Mr. Speaker, why I intend to support this Bill, and I am sure that everybody in the House will join in the wish of the hon. member for Middlesex that peace and happiness may be the lot of these now provinces which are now about to join the great federacy of Canada.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR (Guysborough). Mr. Speaker, allow me to congratulate my hon. friend from Humbolt (Mr. Adamson) on the splendid speech to which we have just listened. It has been one of the most interesting contributions that has been made to the present debate. It would have been more in accord with the etiquette of debate for some hon. gentleman from the other side of the House to undertake to answer my hon. friend; but one thing that has struck me very forcibly during the last few days has been the great calm which has come over the opposition benches. Three or four weeks ago it was different. One would have imagined, from the speeches of hon. gentlemen opposite, and from the articles in the newspapers which support their party, that there was a great agitation in this country, that the heather was on fire all over Canada. The Toronto 'World' and the Toronto 'News' came out day after day with extravagant headlines; the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) deluged us with sarcasm; the hon. member for South York (Mr. Maclean) went about with a chip on his shoulder challenging us all to resign; and the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule), in his own mild and gentle manner, said some pretty hard things about us. But, Sir, the Easter holidays came and have passed away, the ice has melted from the river, the grass has begun to grow, the tulips have begun to appear, and we have all been struck with the quietness of this chamber. We cannot but ask ourselves: Has there really been an agitation in this country? And those who remember that there was an agitation are beginning to inquire what it was all about.

We are told that this is a struggle for provincial rights. Hon. gentlemen opposite claim to be the divinely constituted champions of these rights considering their past record. It is rather satisfactory to find them in that frame of mind. We are rather gratified to perceive this change of heart among so many of our hon. friends opposite on this important question. But in my opinion provincial rights are not at all assailed in this measure, and our hon. friends opposite, in rushing to the rescue, are simply seeking to combat a phantom of their own imagination. If we look into the facts, we will find that there is no such thing in this country as strict provincial rights on the question of education. That is a thing unknown in our constitution. It might be a good thing and I am not at present disposed to say it would not; and if hon. gentlemen opposite wish to start a crusade to change the constitution and place the question of education on a different basis, that would be a fair question to discuss in public and on which to get the sense of the people. And if hon. gentlemen opposite were to start any such crusade, possibly many of us would feel like having the question of education made a purely provincial one. I need hardly refer to the fact, since every hon. gentleman here knows it, that section 91 of the British North America Act enumerates certain subjects as coming under Dominion control, such as the public debt, postal service, fisheries, the criminal law and many others, and that section 92 enumerates the subjects which fall under the control of the provincial legislature, such as direct taxation, the maintenance of hospitals and asylums, property, and civil rights. Then we come to section 93, which deals with the question of education, and that question is dealt with in a different way from any of the others. We do not find it mentioned at all in sections 91 and 92, but we have it specially mentioned in section 93, and that section places it under a divided jurisdiction. Provision is made for separate schools in the old provinces of Quebec and Ontario, and there is also a provision that the minority in the other provinces will have the right to appeal to the Dominion parliament against any injustice done them by a provincial legislature. It seems to me therefore plain that in the matter of education there is no such thing, strictly speaking, as provincial rights under our constitution.

But what are the real merits of the agitation when it is sifted down? The school system of the Northwest Territories is admittedly a good one. The hon. gentleman who spoke last has described what an excellent one it is; and none of the hon. gentlemen opposite who have been addressing us for the past month has ventured to say a word against it. What they do say is simply this, that while in itself it is an