

though I am sorry to say it, couched in most unfortunate language. The language should have been framed, not in the dictatorial spirit which pervades the Order in Council, but it should have been an appeal framed rather in a conciliatory tone to the Government of Manitoba to remedy the grievances which their legislation has promoted. For my part, Sir, I think that in the whole of these proceedings the Government have shown a sad want of discretion. If they had acted in a different spirit, if they had taken any action, the first thing they should have done in my estimation was to have appealed to the Government of Manitoba to redress the evil which their own legislation had created. But at a later period I shall have to deal with this question. I shall not deal with it to-day at length, because after having heard to-day the hon. member for East Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) and the hon. member for Chicoutimi (Mr. Belley). I ask myself, what is the meaning of that Order in Council which is termed a decision? I followed very carefully the language of the hon. gentlemen who moved and seconded the Address, and I found it to furnish a repetition of what has been taking place of late in the Dominion. The order has one meaning in one section and another meaning in another section; the order has one meaning in Catholic constituencies, the order has another meaning in Protestant constituencies. In Verchères and Antigonish it was a pledge to the people that the Government had determined upon interference; in the Protestant constituency of Haldimand the order was simply the first and last of the action to be taken by the Government, and the Government had thereby exhausted their intention. I took a note of the words of the hon. member for East Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) as they fell from his lips, and these are the very words he made use of—if I am wrong he can correct me. The hon. gentleman said: "All that has been done is handing over this case to the legislature of Manitoba, there to be amicably arranged." I took a note also of the words which were spoken by the hon. member for Chicoutimi (Mr. Belley), and they were words of thanks, of faith and of exultation because the Government had determined to render justice to the Catholic minority of Manitoba. Which is correct of these two interpretations? If the interpretation placed upon the language of the hon. member for Chicoutimi is the right one, does it mean interference actively by legislation? Or does it mean, as the hon. member for East Simcoe said, simply the handing over of the case to the legislature of Manitoba, there to be dealt with and amicably arranged? I may be pardoned if I refer for a moment to my own personality. I read the Conservative papers, and paper after paper has done me the honour of calling on me to advise the advisers of His Excellency. I confess I am ambitious of

Mr. LAURIER.

the honour, and perhaps, though unworthy, I may be ready to advise His Excellency, but I am not ready to advise the advisers of His Excellency. One of the papers said that if Mr. Laurier refused to advise the advisers of His Excellency it was through wickedness; another paper said it was through cowardice; and another it was through incapacity. I acknowledge at once that it would be very presumptuous incapacity for me to rush in where these angles fear to tread. But I have only this to say, and to repeat, that I have no desire to create political capital out of this question, I have no desire to go into power through it, if the Government solve it, as they should; but I am not ready to offer advice to the advisers of His Excellency. I shall wait until they bring in their measure. Sir, the Government never consulted me or my predecessor when they brought down the Gerrymander Act of 1882; they never consulted me or my predecessor when they brought in their Franchise Act of 1885; they never consulted me when they brought in the Gerrymander Act of 1892, and I spurn the idea of their calling on me to advise them as to what they should do in this instance. Let them act, and we will judge them according to their action. Before concluding I have a more congenial task to perform. I shall do myself the pleasure of extending to the hon. Finance Minister my sincere congratulations on the promotion that he has received to the seat which he now occupies. I must say I offer the hon. gentleman my own congratulations, and I believe I can speak for the party also in offering him the congratulations of the Liberal party. From the day that the hon. gentleman entered the House his advance has been constant and steady, and as he was elevated from post to post, it is not the language of flattery but the language of sincere truth to say that he always was equal to the expectations of his friends. He now has been promoted to a seat which has been illustrated—I shall speak only of his own party at the present moment—by men of great ability. From the very bottom of my heart I wish that he may discharge the duties appertaining to that seat with as much credit to himself as his predecessors did to themselves, and if I may be permitted to add also, with more benefit to the country, though of this I have but faint hope and no faith whatever.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I cannot do other than, at the very outset of the few remarks that I shall have to make, to thank the hon. gentleman for the very graceful, and what is still better, the evidently hearty way in which he was pleased to give me his own congratulations and those of his party. I augur from that more pleasure during the time that I may occupy this seat than if I had undertaken the position under