

MR. MEREDITH.—What municipality regrets having adopted the ballot?

MR. MOWAT.—I have heard of one in Huron for example.

MR. GIBSON (Huron).—(Addressing Mr. Meredith) I will enlighten you as to that.

MR. MOWAT.—The only suggestion of evidence that Separate School supporters were ripe for the ballot came from an hon. member opposite, who referred to the number of Roman Catholic children attending Public Schools, and in some way or other, the Attorney-General did not know exactly how, the honorable member had argued from that circumstance that the Roman Catholics were in favor of the ballot. Well, if there were children of Roman Catholics attending the Public Schools in places where there were Separate Schools, certainly those Roman Catholics were not in need of the protection of the ballot. If, in spite of the alleged influence of their clergy they sent their children to Public Schools, they are not people

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Separate School elections is needed. For years there has been no petition for the ballot for Separate Schools; no resolution has been passed anywhere in support of the ballot for Separate Schools; there were newspapers supported by the Roman Catholic laity, and none of these had hitherto asked for the ballot so far as I have seen. We have entirely failed to find any evidence that the Roman Catholic laity or any considerable number of them are yet prepared for the ballot in their school elections. So far as there is any evidence either way, it went strongly to prove the contrary.

Now, as to the two bills of the hon. member for London. In one of them—that concerning the ballot—he proposes to change the law on this subject with reference to Public Schools as well as with respect to Separate Schools. The hon. member felt it would be utterly out of the question to force the ballot on Separate Schools and leave it optional as to Public Schools. So a large number of Public Schools which had not adopted the ballot would have it imposed upon them by this Bill if it should become law. He objected to that. It should be left to their own option, as it is now. Well, that was the principle of the Bill, and the proposed compulsion was contrary to all sound principles of legislation—at least to Liberal ideas of legislation. Then there was his other Bill—the hon. member's Bill respecting Separate School supporters, which consists of two sections. The first