

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 little 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 Orangemen. 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 Orangs 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 of-

fence. 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 this planting-out ground of a great empire, should be permitted to develop into glanhood, 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 altogether with these sentiments; but I say that these sentiments are those cherished by a large section of the people of Ontario, people who are reasonable and sensible, and from whom this agitation comes.

The hon. member for North Ontario (Mr. Grant) in discussing this question the other night, showed himself to be in an apologetic frame of mind. He felt called upon to apologize from his place in this House for the province from which he comes. He apologized to his colleagues in this House and to the people in other parts of the country especially for the city of Toronto, because of the position it has taken upon this question. Sir, I have no doubt that the people of Toronto felt very much relieved after that hon. gentleman (Mr. Grant) had made his apology. The people of that great city, I have no doubt, were downcast, they went about with their heads down and feeling very glum. But, after the hon. gentleman had made his apology on their behalf they would make up their minds that the situation was improving and that they might attend the horse show and enjoy