

merely to refer to a few of those referring to subjects with which he was more familiar. The first paragraph was one which would be accepted by both sides of the House. It referred to the lamented decease of the late Lieutenant-Governor. The impartiality of his Administration during the brief period he occupied his exalted position, and the unvarying courtesy and affability which distinguished his demeanour in his relations with others, endeared him to all classes and creeds. His loss, therefore, had been deeply deplored by the community at large. He (Mr. Widdfield) thought he could appeal to the House to unite in congratulating the distinguished gentleman who in consequence of that loss had been called upon to assume the duties and responsibilities of the office of Lieutenant-Governor. Having filled very high and important offices in the State, having been long in the political arena, his Honour possessed great experience and great ability, and bore an unblemished reputation. The House could feel sure that his career would be like that of his predecessors, not only able but impartial. The general character our public men bore would be a sufficient guarantee of this. Men who may have been zealous partisans had been appointed to high places to represent their Sovereign, but no sooner had they been installed than they ceased to remember they had ever held pronounced political views. He considered this a sufficient refutation of the reckless and unfounded charges which were so freely made against the public men of the country by the zealous party press on both sides. Matters, however, had somewhat improved in this respect since Confederation, but there still remained room for improvement, and he hoped to see the day when political issues would be discussed with less acrimony and heat. The House and the country were congratulated in the Speech on the comparative absence of the bribery and corruption which distinguished past elections. There could be no doubt that this result was owing to two causes—the first, the stringent provisions of the Controverted Elections Act, and the second, the operations of the ballot. It might be argued, in opposition to this view of the case, that there were a greater number of petitions filed against the return of members in this year than the last, and a greater number of seats declared vacant. A careful examination of the evidence brought out at the official investigations must satisfy everybody that bribery on any large scale had been effectually done away with. The Election Act had realized the general expectations of the country, but there were many of its provisions which were too stringent. Many members had been disqualified without sufficient grounds. He would not enumerate the clauses he alluded to, but would merely add, what all must admit, that in many instances the disqualified gentlemen had had more law than justice dealt out to them. In fact, he felt so strongly on this point that, although he was aware objection might be taken to the danger of such a precedent, he would be glad if the Government would introduce a measure to relieve those gentlemen of the disabilities they now laboured under. If the Controverted Elections Act remained in its present shape, the danger would be in the opposite direction, and the difficulty now experienced of inducing men to undergo the trouble and annoyance of an election contest would be increased. He was pleased to hear that the Government recognized the full force of this feeling, and had decided to legislate on the subject, and bring in a measure during the present session which, while retaining the best provisions of the present law, would do away with all that was objectionable. He proceeded to say that there was, perhaps, no greater measure contemplated during the present session than that which would propose a change in that important department charged with the educational interests of the Province. The subject would provoke considerable discussion both in the House and the country. He would, therefore, not take up the time of the House by any long remarks on it. He had often expressed surprise at the anomalous position which the Department occupied under our present system of government, and could only suppose that under past systems it had met the requirements of the country. At the present day all classes of people were believers in the system of Responsible Government, and it ought not to be violated in the management of so important a Department as that of education. It seemed to him that the contemplated change was one which ought to have been made long ago. The

present state of the Department was not in harmony with the spirit and genius of our times. The people of Ontario, however, through their representatives, had never evaded the responsibility of making liberal provision for educational purposes, and he hoped they would exercise that supervision which would make the educational system harmonize with the general government. With a responsible Minister of Education on the floor of the House, the Department would be under the control of the House, and would be the means of educating hon. members on the subject of education. It had been argued by some that in making the Minister of Public Instruction an Executive Councillor and giving him a seat in Parliament, there would be danger of mixing up politics with educational matters, to the detriment of the latter. Such an argument would be equally applicable to every other Department, and if admitted, Responsible Government would be practically done away with. He had too much faith in the intelligence of the people, and in the good faith of our public men, to believe there was much danger from this source. They had the additional testimony of the distinguished gentleman who for the last thirty years had been at the head of the Educational Department, and during that time had succeeded in establishing a system of public instruction which, he believed, was not surpassed. The proposition to make the change in the management of that Department came from that gentleman, and his ability and attachment to the interests of the country made his recommendation of additional weight. He had been frequently compelled to differ from him on political matters, but still he must acknowledge that the country was under a deep obligation to him. He (Mr. Widdfield) trusted that the House would grant that gentleman a liberal allowance in recognition of his past services. There were other matters mentioned in the Speech, but as he had pledged himself not to take up the time of the House, he would conclude. Believing that this House represented the true wishes of the people, he felt confident that it would not belie his Honour's expression of belief that it would consider the questions submitted to it with wisdom and patriotism. At the present time Ontario occupied the proud position of being the premier Province of the Canadian Confederation—a Confederation the resources of which were so great that it was scarcely possible to estimate their value. The country had developed to a remarkable degree during the past few years, stimulated by Confederation and fostered by British connection, which he hoped would continue for some time to come. (Hear, hear.) He had no sympathy with those politicians who accused each other of disloyalty, for he felt assured that all of the community were thoroughly loyal, and desired to perpetuate and consolidate British power on this continent. The time may come, probably will come, when either the Colonies or the parent State may feel desirous of a change in their relations. When that arrived, the change sought for will not be in the direction of annexation or independence, but in the shape of a closer tie than that which now binds together Great Britain and her Colonies. There might be a possibility of a grand confederation of the British Empire, and representatives of the Dominion of Canada might, perhaps, be seen side by side with those from Australia and other Colonies. (Hear, hear.) He begged to second the adoption of the Address. (Applause.)

Mr. FERRIS, in seconding the motion, said allusion had been made by his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to the death of the late Lieutenant-Governor. The Province had lost a practical man and this House a statesman, and he desired to express his sorrow for the loss sustained. The gentleman promoted to the office is a successful Canadian among Canadians and a statesman, and no doubt he will justify the wisdom and high expectations formed of him. So far as he has occupied the position already he has justified the highest expectations by the manner he has discharged the duties of his office. (Hear.) Allusion has been made to the general state of the present election law. Perhaps he ought to pass this matter over, for, no doubt, many hon. gentlemen had experienced as much of the provisions of the law as they thought was desirable or pleasant. (Laughter.) But however much inconvenience may have been occasioned in conforming to the law the country has greatly benefited by the present state of the election law, and which he could testify was a very much