

amended in committee and allowed to stand for third reading to-morrow.

On the amendment to the Public Health Act, the bill was referred back to committee, and there the feature giving the board certain control in respect of the character of new water-works was struck out at the instance of the Minister. Mr. Meredith complimented Mr. Dryden on the courage he had shown in acknowledging a wrong, and incidentally expressed regret that the Ministry were not generally more ready to do the same. Mr. Mowat smilingly remarked that it was one of the characteristics of his Government and his followers to acknowledge when there was even any chance of their being wrong. "Except on the Mining Bill," suggested Mr. Conmee, and the matter ended in a laugh, the bill being reported with amendments by the committee.

The Minister of Education.

On the bill to revise the laws respecting the Education Department Mr. White moved, "That it is expedient to place the Education Department under the control of a non-political head, and that the bill be referred back to committee of the whole, with instructions to amend the same by abolishing the position of Minister of Education after the dissolution of the present House."

This amendment Mr. White supported in a brief speech, in which so little was said that no attempt was made to reply, and the vote was brought on at once. The division list showed 31 yeas to 51 nays:—

Division List.

YEAS.—Barr, Bush, Campbell (Algoma), Campbell (Durham), Clancy, Clarke, H. E. (Toronto), Fell, Glendinning, Godwin, Hammell, Hiscott, Hudson, Kerns, McCleary, McCoil, McLennan, Magwood, Meacham, Meredith, Metcalfe, Miscampbell, Monk, Preston, Reid, Rorke, Smith (Frontenac), White, Whitney, Willoughby, Wood (Hastings), Wylie—31.

NAYS.—Allan, Awrey, Balfour, Baxter, Biggar, Bishop, Biehard, Caldwell, Carpenter, Charlton, Chisholm, Clarke (Wellington), Cleland, Conmee, Dack, Davis, Dowling, Dryden, Ferguson, Field, Fraser, Garrow, Gibson (Hamilton), Gibson (Huron), Gilmour, Guthrie, Harcourt, Hardy, Lockhart, Loughrin, McKay (Oxford), McKay (Victoria), McKechnie, H. McKenzie, Mack, C. Mackenzie, Moore, Mowat, O'Connor, Paton, Porter, Rayside, Ross, Sharpe, Smith (York), Snider, Sprague, Stratton, Tait, Waters, Wood—51.

Separate Schools.

It will be remembered that at a former stage of this bill Mr. Meredith criticised it as not containing the reference to Separate Schools contained in previous statutes on the same subject, and as thereby giving up the right of control on the part of the Government, or at least leading in that direction. He announced that before this bill was passed he would put himself on record on this subject. On Mr. White's amendment being disposed of and the motion for third reading of the bill being called again, Mr. Meredith moved the following amendment:—

"That every school supported in whole or in part by money voted by this House, and every school on the trustees or other governing body of which the Legislature has conferred the power of levying taxes for its support, is subject to the regulation of and to control by the Legislature; that neither the British North America Act nor any other act or law has divested the Legislature of that power or conferred it upon any religious organisation or body; that the rights conferred by the said act upon or secured to the supporters of Separate or dissentient schools are civil rights appertaining to them as citizens, and that it is neither the constitutional authority of the Legislature, through the Department of Education, to regulate such schools nor to prescribe the text books to be used and the course of study to be pursued in their religious instruction; and that the said bill be not now read the third time, but be forthwith referred back to the committee of the whole House, with instruction to amend the same so as to include such Separate and dissentient schools within the classes of schools dealt with by the said bill."

The speech in support of this resolution had evidently been prepared with some care. He began by saying that it was difficult in any case to deal with questions involving differences of race and creed, but far more difficult when political considerations intervened and political capital was to be made by raising the cry that appeals were being made to passion and prejudice. He disclaimed any desire to wound the feelings or interfere with the faith of any man, and, declaring that in his veins flowed as good Roman Catholic blood as in those of the Commissioner of Public Works (Mr. Fraser), who had criticised him this afternoon, demanded to know why it should be supposed that he would seek wantonly to interfere with the liberties or outrage the sentiments of his fellow-citizens of Roman Catholic origin. But, great as had been the need for plain speaking before, the necessity was greater than ever now. Men who kept their eyes open could not but see, he contended, that encroachments were being made upon the public control of education, and this bill he took to be one of the signs of it. He referred to Quebec as an example, and, while admitting that there

were good and loyal men there, there were growing up in the Province a party not loyal to British connection or to the Confederation. He quoted the remarks attributed to Mgr. Labelle, Deputy Minister of Agriculture under Mr. Mercier, to the effect that the growth of the French-Canadian population in Quebec and in New England gave hope of a time when there would be a powerful people united in support of French institutions and the Roman Catholic religion. He contended that if the assertion of the right to tax for school purposes and to compel attendance of children at school meant anything, it necessarily involved the right of control of the means by which education was to be given. He quoted former statutes at some length to show that they contained recognition of a power of controlling Separate Schools which was not contained in this bill, and for that reason he opposed it and demanded the change called for by his resolution. In closing he declared that he cared nothing for the results to his own political fortunes. "I care nothing for a political future," he said. His object was to seek the benefit of the Province of Ontario, and that object he would pursue unswervingly.

Mr. Fraser in his reply expressed regret that the question of Public Schools had been so much discussed in public places, for that discussion was not calculated to allay irritation and to induce what was best for the Province or the Dominion. But the hon. leader of the Opposition and his friends seemed determined to keep this question before the public, and to keep it in the seething state in which they had kept it for years past, in order to make political capital for themselves. This led him up to a consideration of Mr. Meredith's words concerning charges made against him of seeking political advantage through this agitation. Mr. Fraser declared with frankness that in his opinion no charge had ever been more justly made or more clearly proven against a public man. One proof of it he found in the view taken by the Roman Catholics themselves. Formerly divided between the political parties, they had supported the Government more numerously in the election of 1887, and in the last election they pronounced against the Opposition leader practically as a unit, for the reason that they believed him to be raising a cry against them for his own political advantage. As against Mr. Meredith's attempts at justification, he reminded the House of the fact that the Opposition had sought by their "Facts for Irish Electors" to cause the Roman Catholics to regard the Liberals as prejudiced against Separate Schools and unsafe guardians of the interests of the supporters of those institutions. Not only Roman Catholics, but a large proportion of the Protestant population ranged themselves against the hon. gentleman. Unable to make out his case on the merits of the question in hand, the hon. gentleman spoke of Mr. Mercier and annexation, quoting the utterances attributed to Mgr. Labelle in the press. The hon. gentleman would hardly care to be held responsible for everything attributed by the press to him, and as for charges of annexation they were so generally made and against so many men in the ranks of the Liberals of Canada, a party which at every crisis had proven its loyalty to the Crown and to the people, that they had ceased to frighten anybody. He reminded the House of the taunts thrown across from the Opposition before the election that they would soon come into power. They expected to reach the treasury benches, and they chose their platform with that view. But their appeal to passion and prejudice was in vain. Referring to the word "strangers," which Mr. Meredith had used in speaking of the French-Canadians, Mr. Fraser demanded to know when those people became strangers in this Province, which was at one time a part of the French-Canadian Province of Quebec. They were Canadians with as much right to assist in moulding the institutions of the country as the English-speaking people of the Dominion. Referring to Mr. Meredith's motion particularly he went into an able constitutional argument against this House attempting by legislation to change the British North America Act under which Separate Schools were guaranteed or even to interpret it in that regard. He insisted that this interpretation should be left to the courts, a tribunal above politics and free from the disturbing influences of political warfare. The amendment, and more particularly the speech by which it had been supported, was an attempt to prejudice in advance the interpretation of the case by the court. He would not, as a Separate School supporter, reduce if he could by one iota the control exercised by the Minister of Education over the Separate Schools for the reason that it would involve a change in what he regarded as a solemn treaty which he had no wish to see broken. He made an eloquent plea for recognition of the position taken by Separate School supporters who regard the maintenance of these schools as a religious and conscientious duty, and declared that the Roman Catholics would be cowards if, harboring the sentiments they did, they would not seek by every honorable means to maintain the system. He told of Protestants all over the country who were sending their children to other than Public Schools, and warned Mr. Meredith that if the attempt were made, which his argument seemed to involve, to dictate to the parent to what school the child should be sent, the love of British liberty, of civilised liberty, would cause the people to rise and drive out a