

not here to persecute anybody or do any one wrong. We take the ground as members of the government of Manitoba that it is our duty to provide a system of education that will educate the people instead of allowing them to grow up in ignorance.

In the case of Manitoba the Act has been decided to be constitutional. It does not interfere with any one else in the Dominion of Canada.

Then he goes on to say:

I notice that a day or two ago the members of the Dominion government in speaking of the people of this constituency said: You have to make a compromise of this kind wherever there are Roman Catholic and Protestant people.

In the province of Prince Edward Island, there are no separate schools. In Nova Scotia, there are no separate schools. In New Brunswick and British Columbia, there are no separate schools. In the United States there are no separate schools. There are no separate schools in Switzerland or in the cities of Belgium, and wherever you find progress, excepting in Quebec and Ontario, which made a compact at the time of confederation.

What does that sentence mean? It means that in the opinion of the hon. member for Brandon, the constitution, as applied to schools, refers to Ontario and Quebec only.

Wherever you go to find a progressive system of education, you find it in such a system as we have adopted in Manitoba.

What does he say about the clergy?

Is Dr. Montague particularly interested in looking after that particular matter? I don't think he is. I don't think he cares two straws in promoting the interests of the Roman Catholic Church in a matter of this kind. Why is it then that he takes such an interest in it? It is because the Roman Catholic clergy are a well known organized body, and because they have political influence in Canada, which is not to be sneezed at.

During the last 100 years, you will find that whenever a constitutional Act was prepared of an organized character, you will find that something is drawn which indicates the hand of the clergy is there—

Here is a sentence that I call to the attention of this House:

The language may be the language of the Canadian politician, but in every case the voice is the voice of the church.

Have you heard anything similar to that? Has there been anything similar in what has transpired recently in connection with this matter? I do not know, but I must say that it seems that the sentiment which the hon. member for Brandon expressed at that time applies equally well to what has been going on in this country during the last two or three months, and that in this case it is the voice of the church which is heard. Now, I have here also what the hon. Minister of Militia (Sir Frederick Borden) said at that time. I went into this matter very fully to find what each of these hon. gentlemen said at that time, but I will not take up the time

of the House in order to present these opinions. I have read the opinions of the hon. member for Brandon. I will, however, give the House a quotation from a speech by the right hon. leader of the government. The right hon. gentleman said in connection with this Manitoba Act:

The position I took on this question, I took on the floor of this parliament, I took in the province of Ontario, I took in the province of Quebec, I maintained it everywhere, and it was this, that though the constitution of this country gave to this parliament the right and power of interference with the school legislation of Manitoba, it was an extreme right, a reserved power, to be exercised only when all other means have been exhausted.

When Sir Wilfrid Laurier was opposing the Remedial Bill in 1896, his cry was for an investigation to learn what the people of Manitoba wanted. When two years ago the leader of the opposition advocated provincial autonomy for the Territories, the First Minister answered that he desired to have a larger representation from the west in this House so that he might get a fuller expression of opinion from that country. Well, the Territories got additional representation, and I would like to know to what extent these gentlemen were consulted in reference to this Bill. The Minister of the Interior was not consulted, the Minister of Finance was not consulted, Mr. Haultain was not consulted, and the reason which the Prime Minister gave for postponing autonomy was not carried out. It is interesting to note that when the Prime Minister introduced this Bill, his speech occupies forty-two columns of 'Hansard' and twenty-two of these columns are devoted to the school question. The whole time of the Prime Minister was taken up in addressing the members on his own side of the House and trying to convince them. It was a most eloquent address, and I have read it over and over again, and at its conclusion every man on the other side of the House with one exception battered his desk and clapped with the greatest enthusiasm. This indicated that they were absolutely and entirely satisfied with the first draft of the Bill brought down to this House. You can talk as much as you like about a compromise, but the first Bill brought into this House was the Bill the Prime Minister wanted passed and it would have been passed if the government had been able to pass it. Well, Sir, the scene was changed and the play on the other side of the House, from the date of the introduction of the Bill, to the present hour, is worthy of the stage. When the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) arrived in town he censured the Prime Minister for not consulting him on this important question, and there is no doubt but that the Bill was drafted by a set of men who were not familiar with the conditions in that western country. The only man we had who had the ability to stand up for the west was not