

said is England's greatest pride and which men like John Morley and Professor Bryce delight to study and to point to with admiration and sympathy. The people of Ontario have watched the progress that has marked the rise of British institutions, they have seen these institutions transferred to this country, and they find to-day that the English language is spoken by over eighty million people on the North American continent. They see this great continent, under the influence of these British institutions, progressing as no other portion of the world is progressing to-day. They think of these things, and try to find out what is the underlying principle of that progress, what is the spirit of the American continent, and what is the spirit of that great English movement that has taken place and has been transferred from the little Isle across the sea, to this great continent, and dominates this great continent to-day.

And what is it? First and foremost it is that the spirit of the American continent, including Canada, is a thorough belief in liberty of conscience. Next to this is a belief in equality of civil rights, the belief that every man must be equal before the law. Following that is a belief in complete separation of church and state. And last of all is the belief that the hope of the nation, the hope of British institutions on the American continent, is in a national system of education. The right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) saw fit in his first address on this Bill to pass certain reflections upon the national schools system of the United States. By innuendo, nay, by direct statement, he sought to lead this country to believe that the divorces and other disorders in the United States were largely due to the national school system of that country. I take issue with the right hon. gentleman there. Had it not been for the national school system of the United States, that country would never have been able to digest the great foreign element that has come into it. And I contend that if you impose separate schools, ecclesiastical schools, on these new provinces of the west, you are going to put them back twenty-five years, yes fifty years, in the race of progress upon which they have so hopefully entered. The public school system is the hope of the United States. If they have great problems, the men who are being trained in their public schools are the men who will solve them. I have often spoken in this House against some of the institutions and political movements of that country, but there is no country on the face of the globe to-day that is producing men of the calibre and capacity that the United States is producing. As Professor Bryce said the other day, there are no people like the people of the United States to tackle great questions of transportation and industrial development, espe-

cially of the great interest in which we are so much concerned, that of agriculture. The great transportation problem, even under their system of private ownership, the great questions of finance and agriculture, are being handled by a class of men in the United States who for calibre and for capacity, for ability to rise to the necessities of any question, cannot be surpassed in any portion of the world. And every one of these men, as a matter of fact, came out of the public schools of that country. So that any one who would stigmatize the public school system of the United States and say that it is a menace to that country says that with which I cannot agree. Let me read what a friend of mine says in a letter received the other day. The writer is a Canadian who is now in the United States:

Your national schools are turning out Canadians and British subjects, your separate schools, Catholics. You must get out of the church business if you are to have a nation. Every taxpayer in the United States contributes to the support of the national schools. If he wishes to send his children to private or other schools, he may do so, but he still pays his taxes to the national school. Why should he not pay for public schools? The United States is not running any particular church; it is running the country, and, in an educational sense it is running it well. It is educating children to be United States citizens. The child is Americanized by the national school. On account of the national school of the United States, there are no bickerings or political fights between the Protestants and Roman Catholics. The people here are Americans, not Protestants and Roman Catholics. Where the separate school exists in Canada, you have Protestants and Catholics, not Canadians. If you are to have 'peace and good will' in the Northwest, in the years that are to come, give the people national schools, and no other kind. Any man who advocates a separate school for the west is an enemy of Canada—the worst enemy the country can have.

And just the other day a very distinguished prelate of the United States delivered an Easter Greeting to the people of his country. I refer to James Cardinal Gibbons, the worthy archbishop of Baltimore. On the 15th of April he issued this address to the American people:

In one century we have grown from three millions to eighty millions. We have grown up not as distinct, independent and conflicting communities, but as one corporate body breathing the same atmosphere of freedom, governed by the same laws, enjoying the same political rights. I see in all this a wonderful manifestation of the humanizing and elevating influence of Christian civilization. We receive from abroad the people of various nations, races, tongues, habits and temperaments, who speedily become assimilated by the human mass and form one homogenous society. That is the secret of our social stability and order. It results, from wise laws based on Christian principle, and which are the echo of Christ's eternal law. That is the cohesive power that