

ists in the west to agitate and agitate till they should get the full measure of justice to which they thought they were entitled. And the Minister of Justice does not make any bones about what that is. The Prime Minister does not hesitate to say what that is? No hon. gentleman of the Roman Catholic faith who has spoken in behalf of the government hesitates to tell us what it is;—and it is that side by side in the schools, as you impart secular education and you shall impart religious education and training as well and you shall pay for them both out of the same fund. I do not say that they are wrong in entertaining that opinion. But I say it is a discussable question in this country; and, if it is contended that the minority have a right to discuss it, then the majority have a right to take part in that discussion in a moderate and proper way,—and I will not say a word offensive or inflammatory; I would rather discuss the legal aspect of the case, but I think this is not the best time for that, and besides that phase of it has been so well discussed by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition; in committee I may have a word or two to say on that phase of the matter. I say that, if the minority are free to discuss this matter, then, the majority certainly have a right to present their views without being denounced from day to day by the government party as trying to raise an agitation, to inflame the minds of the people by appealing to their prejudices. I, for one, repel such an insinuation. I make no such appeals. But I say distinctly that I do want to see the people aroused to the fact that we are, probably for the last time, dealing with a great question affecting the greater portion of the Dominion. I want the people to realize that this is a question which may determine the permanency of the British institutions on this part of the continent. I do not wish to say anything extravagant. But look at the condition. People are pouring in there from the United States—it is the boast of hon. gentlemen opposite that thousands of them are coming in. They are people who have not been accustomed to a system of separate schools and who will not willingly submit to separate schools. We have people coming in from all other quarters of the earth as well. Many of them have been oppressed in their own country and have had grievances not unlike to this. They have come to what they have regarded as a free country. They have come to a country in which, they were told by the literature given them by the Minister of Interior, that they would have free national schools. These people are living alongside the United States. And the United States is watching every movement in Canada. They know and realize, as fully as Canadians do, the vast possibilities that exist in the west, and they are waiting to see if there shall arise an opportunity to annex that great and fertile territory to the United States. If we crowd these people of

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ours too far; if we make them restless; if we show them that when their representatives come to Ottawa those representatives are regarded as of no account, that they are to be told: We will see you again, and then not see them again, but proceed to introduce legislation affecting them without hearing what they have to say about it,—if this is our treatment of them, what may we expect? I do not say it will happen, but I want you to be careful that it does not happen—careful that some morning, when the prosperity of Canada appears to be great, when the population of that territory is large and growing, these provinces west of the Great Lakes and reaching to the foot of the mountains may not be found contemplating throwing in their lot with the United States between them and whom are no geographical barriers, no great range of mountains or other obstacle to communication, and that we may not find out, too late, that all the power of Great Britain cannot prevent those people becoming part and parcel of the United States. It is a serious question; there never was so serious a question in the history, of Canada, to my mind.

Now, as the question has come up, I intend to consider whether or not the Catholic church exerts a political influence—a political and sometimes a controlling political influence. I have prepared authorities and I have them here. Testimony is given both ways. An hon. gentleman on this side of the House for whom I have the greatest respect, both as regards his opinions and as regards his candour, in expressing those opinions, has pointed out that the Roman Catholic clergy do not exert political influence. I have the testimony of the hon. member for North Simcoe last night, but I could not subscribe to his statement, that the clergy would go to the extent of excommunicating people for their political opinions or connections. I do not believe anything of the kind. But I will refer to authorities that will not be disputed. First, I may be permitted to give the testimony of the Prime Minister. The premier speaking in the debate on the motion for the six months hoist, recorded in 'Hansard,' on page 2758, said:

I cannot forget at this moment that the policy which I have advocated and maintained all along has not been favourably received in all quarters. Not many weeks ago I was told from high quarters in the church to which I belong, that unless I supported the School Bill which was then being prepared by the government, and which we have now before us, I would incur the hostility of a great and powerful body. Sir, this is too grave a phase of this question for me to pass by in silence. I have only this to say: even though I have threats held over me coming, as I am told, from high dignitaries in the church to which I belong, no word of bitterness shall ever pass my lips as against that church.

Now, I will take the liberty, because it involves another point as well, of referring