

I refer also to the statement of the Minister of Justice—only in the course of argument I am bound to say—but it has an important bearing, inasmuch as he as well as other ministers of the Crown, had been called upon to deny this statement. The Minister of Justice is thus reported on page 4206 of 'Hansard':

Assuming it to be true that the delegate was consulted, where is the difference in principle between the case of our friends in 1896 and the present occasion?

I also refer—and this is the last reference I will make—to the hon. member for South Simcoe (Mr. Lennox) as reported in 'Hansard' at page 4314:

When this question was launched a few weeks ago it assumed great importance, but since then a further and still more important issue has cropped up, and that is that undue influences are at work controlling and guiding the administration in a manner which should not be possible in a free British country. There is the fact—and the Prime Minister has not dared to deny it—that he has had conference after conference with the Papal Ablegate, not only as to clause 16 of the original Bill, but as to the amended educational clause which was substituted for it.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have very little further to add in connection with this matter. The issue between the hon. member for Cape Breton and myself was clearly and distinctly defined. I made the assertion that the right hon. leader of the government had been interrogated on the floor of this House as to whether he had been holding consultations with the Papal ablegate in connection with the educational clauses of this Bill or not and that although he had been interrogated he had not taken occasion to deny the assertion. I have read the statements of hon. members as reported in 'Hansard' that the right hon. Prime Minister was so interrogated and the question comes down to this that if the hon. member for Cape Breton, as I said in my opening, appreciates the position that he has placed himself in by the statement he made at that meeting declaring the statement I made to be false and slanderous and offering to resign his seat if I could prove the statement I made to be contained upon the pages of 'Hansard,' he should carry out his undertaking. While I do not expect from an hon. member who would be so careless in making a statement such as that to which I have referred, which he is reported to have made in the 'Globe' newspaper and which must have been made with a knowledge of its falsity or with a total disregard and want of knowledge as to whether it is true or false, that he will resign his seat in the House I do think that the least he could possibly do would be to take the first opportunity to apologize to the audience before which he made the speech to which I have referred.

Mr. D. D. McKENZIE. Mr. Chairman, if I am lectured upon moral ethics, and upon my conduct as a citizen of this Dominion and upon the way in which I should exercise my rights and if I am obliged to accept that lecture, possibly it would be proper for me to inquire into the source of that lecture and as to how well the hon. gentleman who undertakes to lecture me has exercised those rights himself and what is his history in the particular place from which he comes. I must say at the very beginning that there is a direct issue between the hon. gentleman and myself on a question of fact. If you, Mr. Chairman, or any other hon. gentleman in this House, had to meet this hon. gentleman in North Oxford as I had to meet him, if you had to hear his speeches and his statements of alleged facts as I had to hear them, you would not be surprised that there is a direct issue as to the facts between that hon. gentleman and myself at the threshold of this question. I am not very well acquainted with hon. gentlemen in this House. I am a stranger to many of you. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) knows me. He knows the province from which I come. I put myself in his judgment if in the province from which I come and among the people who know me my word would not be taken on a plain question of fact between the hon. gentleman who has just spoken and myself. I will at least ask the hon. members of this House to follow the ordinary common sense way of things and to consider how a circumstance of this kind would have been brought about. It is a well defined and well understood rule of evidence that there must be an order of common sense in the way things are brought about and a story is told. I will say that only a part of the truth has been stated by the hon. gentleman as to what took place at the meeting in that campaign at which we met in North Oxford. It is quite true that I said I would bring this matter up in the House. It is well within the experience of every hon. member of this House that in discussions of the character that took place between the hon. member and myself very often things take place and expressions made use of which might not take place at cooler moments, and we think it just as well to let sleeping dogs lie. The North Oxford election is over. It resulted favourably to us, we were triumphant, we are rejoicing in the victory, and I thought it would be a small business on my part to bring this matter up in the House. I thought it would be just as well to let it go. If the hon. gentleman thinks he is going to make any capital in parliament out of what took place at that meeting I think his effort will result in failure. I am only too glad to meet him. I have taken part in campaigns not only in my own province but in other provinces, and in these campaigns I have always discussed the issue