

causes of the differences which have arisen between the dissenting member and his colleagues. My hon. friend knows that in every government, it must always be presumed that there will be some differences of opinion among the members composing it. It is not to be supposed that in a cabinet composed of 13 or 14 members, all the ministers are of one mind upon all questions. It must be expected that there will be some differences among them. It is not in human nature that they should agree on all matters, and therefore some latitude must be allowed the individual members, and this latitude is always extended until it becomes impossible for one of the members of the administration to agree with his colleagues. Let me quote Todd :

Upon the formation of a ministry which embraces men of different shades of political opinion, it necessarily follows that there must be, to a greater or less extent, mutual concessions and compromises. But with the rare exception of certain questions, which by previous consent it is agreed shall be considered as 'open,' it is an admitted principle that all the responsible ministers of the crown are bound to unite in furthering the measures of government through parliament, and in otherwise carrying out the policy which has been agreed upon by the cabinet. This policy is framed in the first instance by the prime minister in accordance with the principle of the party to which he belongs. It then forms the basis of negotiation between himself and those whom he may invite to assist him in carrying on the Queen's government.

All members of the cabinet should agree on questions of policy, but if there should be a disappointment, if, as in the case of the hon. member for Brandon, there should be a difference of opinion, then either a compromise must be reached or the dissenting colleague resigns from the cabinet. In the latter case it is the duty of the First Minister to give the House information of the causes which led to this unhappy result just as an explanation of the policies of the government is due to the House when the government is formed. But does my hon. friend expect the government to give to the House all the different conversations or deliberations which may have taken place in council—everything which passed either in writing or by word of mouth? If he so expects, his expectation is not borne out by the authorities on the subject.

It will be sufficient for me to quote to him the author from whom he himself has quoted, who is recognized as the standard authority upon these subjects. I quote from Todd, Vol. 2, page 487. After having stated that the House is entitled to have full explanation on the formation of a government, Todd goes on to say :

But the House has no right to ask for more than a general exposition of the main principles on which a government is formed. It has no right to inquire into all the conditions which may have taken place between the several

members of the government. Any arrangements, however, which have been specially referred to in debate by new ministers as the stipulations and conditions upon which they agreed to accept office, may be suitably inquired into by other members.

And this rule that is laid down for the formation of a government is exactly the rule laid down, as I understand the constitutional authorities on the point, in relation to giving information concerning a government that, instead of being formed is, to some extent disrupted. A few days ago, it was my duty—my painful duty—to communicate to the House the reasons which had brought about the rupture between the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) and the government. I do not know that the House is entitled to more information than I gave them. There are the facts, and the matter has been brought before the House. My hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) has taken exception, and when the time comes to discuss the matter, he will be able to give whatever explanation he thinks it well to give. Until that time, the House must rest content with the explanation given. The hon. gentleman has not stated whether, in this matter, he refers to the Bill in toto, or simply to the educational clauses. It will be open to him to tell the House to what extent he refers to the Bill as a whole or to what extent he refers to in toto. Up to this time, I do not think the House is entitled to more information from us than that which has already been imparted.

My hon. friend asks a second question. He wants to know whether any action is to be taken to fill the vacancy in the portfolio of the Interior caused by the resignation of my hon. friend from Brandon (Mr. Sifton). He is entitled to a full and categorical answer. No action has been taken, and it is not my intention now to take any action in the way of filling that portfolio.

And my hon. friend asks still another question. He wants to know if any changes are contemplated in the Bill. Really, the hon. gentleman is very inquisitive. I said the other day—and I think my hon. friend will agree with me—that I am not aware of any measure of any great importance, and I am aware of very few measures even of little importance, that have ever gone over that table without having changes made in them; and I shall be much surprised if this Bill, which is of such great importance runs the gauntlet of this House without fault being found with it—perhaps by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden); perhaps by my hon. friend who sits next to him (Mr. Foster); perhaps by my hon. friend who sits behind him (Mr. Monk), or, perhaps by my hon. friend who sits at his right hand (Mr. Sproule). Perhaps fault will be found on one hand, perhaps on many. Therefore, I cannot see how it is possible to gratify my hon. friend and say anything as to changes being contemplated.