

buy out the English-speaking farmers. They could get money at a very low rate of interest—

Mr. BRODEUR. The hon. gentleman refers to a fund. What fund is that?

Mr. SPROULE. A fund supplied by the church.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. SPROULE. That may be something laughable, or it may be something absurd.

Mr. BRODEUR. Will the hon. gentleman—

Mr. SPROULE. Now, the hon. gentleman made it a point to interrupt me repeatedly when I was up before. I simply made the request to be allowed to explain. Then it was said that the farm was purchased—why? For this reason, that as soon as the farm got into the hands of a Roman Catholic it was subject to the tithes which the church could collect, and thus became a supporter of the church; but that so long as it was owned by a Protestant, it was not a supporter of the church. Therefore there was a strong inducement for the Roman Catholic to purchase it. It was said that a fund was raised by the church for this purpose—not improperly at all—and that one farm after another was taken over in that way until the English-speaking population got to be so few that they were unable to keep up their schools and churches, and these were closed; the people had no community of interest amongst themselves because they could not keep up their schools, their children were raised in ignorance; and this application was made to the government for assistance or for a loan to enable a number of these people to go to the Northwest Territories. That is the explanation.

Mr. LEMIEUX. Mr. Speaker, you have there an evidence of the ignorance—the honest ignorance, I must say—of my hon. friend. I appeal to his neighbour, my hon. friend from Beauharnois, to my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier, to my hon. friend from St. Antoine, to my hon. friend from the county of Huntingdon, where the Huntingdon 'Gleaner' is published, and I ask them to stamp at once such statement as arrant nonsense. To think that the church, which is greatly indebted in the province of Quebec, and which is even borrowing money from English insurance companies and English banks, has a fund to buy farms from the English-speaking people of the province of Quebec, why! it is simply preposterous.

Mr. SPROULE. I wish to say—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Sit down.

Mr. SPROULE. Is that the tolerance that is extended to a member who wishes to say a word on behalf of Protestantism in this country? I treat those hon. gentlemen

Mr. SPROULE.

with respect and am entitled to expect a like return from them. I rise to say that the Huntingdon 'Gleaner' gives an account of the very same thing described in the letter I read.

Mr. FISHER. It is altogether astray.

Mr. LEMIEUX. My hon. friend from Peel (Mr. Blain) quoted some of the authorities against this measure, and did not fail to mention the name of Mr. Haultain. I have very much respect for the First Minister of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Haultain is a talented young statesman from the west. He has been in Ottawa a few weeks, and no doubt feels compelled to speak in accord with the Tory press, because he is also a Tory statesman. During the last elections he took a very prominent and active part against this government in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Haultain is therefore bound to be against the government. But there is another gentleman who accompanied Mr. Haultain on his mission to the Ottawa government. We saw him on the floor of this House when this Bill was introduced. I refer to Mr. Bulyea. I understand that Mr. Bulyea gave an expression of his opinion to the Toronto press not long ago, and when I compare the statements of Mr. Haultain with those of Mr. Bulyea, I find that they differ toto coelo. Mr. Haultain has taken this government to task on the educational clauses, the land clauses and on the division of the provinces, but Mr. Bulyea declares, speaking for his province and himself, that he is perfectly satisfied with the measure as presented by the government.

Sir, the question now before the House and the country marks an epoch in the history of Canada. It deserves our best attention and all our solicitude, as it is surrounded with immense difficulties. I must crave the indulgence of the House during the few remarks I will offer, remembering always that the more contentious an issue is the more it must be approached in a spirit of conciliation and tolerance, and I earnestly hope that not one word, not one sentence, will fall from my lips that will in the least offend even the most sturdy opponent of the measure.

As to the principle of autonomy, I do not believe that there is in the House one dissenting voice. From every part of Canada the birth of the twin provinces has been hailed with joy; nay, more, with a legitimate pride.

The Northwest Territories are the creation of the Canadian commonwealth. They are its offspring. The fathers of confederation were not satisfied with the union of the different British colonies scattered from one end of the continent to the other. They thought—and wisely so—that the immense prairies extending from the great lakes to the Rocky mountains should also be included in the Dominion, so as to unite, under the British flag, all the territories extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific. They did