

No doubt, at the instance of Premier Roblin, Attorney General Campbell and Mr. Rogers intended to see the ablegate when they came down here in regard to this school question—there is not the slightest doubt about it—and they did go and see the ablegate. Now what took place? We have a statement of alleged facts given to the people of this country. Is it issued by the man who is supposed to guide the province of Manitoba, by the premier of that province? Does he venture to give his official sanction to any statement of facts in regard to this matter? Not at all. Is it issued by the Attorney General of the province of Manitoba, the man who had the interview with the ablegate? If we are going to have any official statement as to the negotiations, as to what was said and done, and if we are going to have this flame of religious discord fanned in this country by our hon. friends opposite, at least we should expect them to start this flame going by some facts based upon the statement of a man who was present and who took part in the interview. Why, Sir, my hon. friend the leader of the opposition is too good a lawyer—and we recognize him in our province as a good lawyer—he is too good a lawyer not to know that hearsay testimony is not worth anything, and the statement of Mr. Rogers upon which all this flame of religious discord is to be started up is the worst kind of hearsay testimony, it is testimony that my learned friend, if he were a judge, would not listen to for one moment, and would reject if it were offered in evidence.

Now the result is that we have all this excitement based upon what? Upon a statement of facts made by a gentleman in regard to certain things within his own knowledge? No, Sir, mark that. While we have been discussing in this House and the newspapers have been discussing for days certain alleged facts in regard to certain things, no public man has yet ventured to state that he knows anything of these things of his own knowledge. But we have this hearsay statement, and hearsay statements as well as any other old statement are sufficient material just now for certain gentlemen to fan a flame of religious discord. We have in addition to the statement two insinuations. The first insinuation is that Sir Wilfrid wanted time to enable the invitation of the Papal ablegate to be acted upon. Well, now, what do we find? We find that the interview with the premier of this country took place on February 17, we find that the interview with the ablegate took place on February 23. In the meantime the policy of the government had been formulated in regard to the western boundaries of Manitoba, and it was announced in this House and in the country what the policy of the government was. Could it be possible,

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is it reasonable to suggest to any sane man that a statement made two days after an announcement of policy in this House, could be taken as being indicative of an intention to have anything to do with, or any influence upon, this government in determining that policy? Yet that is what is being asserted. Then we are told that the ablegate's suggestion was made with the full knowledge and consent of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which is the second insinuation. And what do we find? We find that the premier of this country solemnly stated yesterday:

I assert that if Mr. Rogers stated that Monseigneur Sbarretti did press him to make the suggestion of terms and conditions which he says Monseigneur Sbarretti did with my knowledge, he states something which is not in accordance with truth.

Could any statement be more categorically denied than that? And no member of this House ventures for one moment to declare that that denial should not be accepted with the fullest credence. Let us look at what the ablegate said in regard to this matter:

This is the sum and substance of my interview with Mr. Campbell. The federal government had absolutely no knowledge of it.

And yet, as I say, upon hearsay testimony, upon inferences which the youngest child would not draw and which no judge in this country would venture to think of considering in a case tried before him, this House is being detained to listen to assertions such as we have heard for two days past. And this is done, because hon gentlemen opposite have been eight years in opposition and have exhausted every possible effort to tarnish in the slightest degree the escutcheon of the great leader of the Liberal party, and hope, at last, by this roor-back, by this fool story, that judge and jury would not hang a cat upon, to mislead public opinion.

Let us look at this statement, the only statement of fact we have from any source as to what went on—every hon. member will agree that Mr. Rogers' statement must be discarded as hearsay testimony. The ablegate says:

I never met Hon. Mr. Rogers, nor did I have any communication with him.

On the evening before his departure for the west (February 23), Mr. Campbell came. I asked him if something could not be done to improve the condition of the Catholics of his province with respect to education. I pointed out that in the cities of Winnipeg and Brandon, for instance, the Catholics were paying double taxes.

I urged my request on the ground of fairness and justice, and referring to his mission to Ottawa, I remarked that, from the view of the Manitoba government, some action on these lines would be a political expedient, and tend to facilitate the accomplishment of his object, inasmuch as the Catholics in any territory which