

to take this as being the outspoken and conscientious conviction of one of the most ultra-Protestant newspapers we have in this country. The Montreal 'Witness' says:

The Roman Catholic has a conscience about his schools. We deny the rightness or wisdom of that conscience. But whatever its source, it has to be recognized as a fact, and if so, it is in the same category with other claims based on liberty of conscience. . . .

It is not hard to understand the strength of provincialism in Ontario, whose whole history has been an effort to get free from the adjoining province, which at one time had too powerful a sway over her. But it always seems strange to us when this cry is echoed among the minority in Quebec, which has everything to lose by it. The declaration that education is absolutely a matter for the individual province, and that any national stipulation with regard to it is an outrage, sounds very strange coming from people who would not submit for a moment to such a system of schools as the majority in their own province would consider ideal. When asked if they would so submit, they say with surprise, 'Why, that is a totally different thing, the Quebec system would be sectarian, while the common school system should be so carried on as to offend no religion.'

I would point out that although it might be so carried on it is not so carried on in the province of Quebec. The 'Witness' continues:

They do not see that this is begging the question. Of course the two ideals are very different. If it were not so, there would be none of this trouble. But just as strong as is our objection to the clerical school for our children, so strong is the objection of the Roman Catholic for the non-clerical school.

And, Sir, if we wish that our prejudices, our ideas and our views in regard to non-sectarian schools should be adopted, we must respect the idea of the Roman Catholics in regard to religious teaching. I think, Sir, that I have proven that I voiced the feelings of the Protestants of Quebec. These hon. gentlemen opposite have been raising an agitation, and as it is hinted at there by the Montreal 'Witness,' they have been trying to drag out the demon of racial and religious strife in this country. Why? Hon. gentlemen opposite have tried to place the responsibility for this on the government and on the Prime Minister especially. Sir, in any Autonomy Bill like this, whoever may frame it, it is necessary to specify in regard to education just as much as it is necessary to specify in regard to anything else with regard to the formation of the new provinces. No government could frame an Autonomy Bill without introducing an educational clause. The provisions of the British North America Act cannot apply under the peculiar circumstances and conditions of this case, and therefore we have to use precise language and for the purpose of using precise language we have to introduce a clause in the law. It has been said in some of the newspapers—and I regret to say that the words of the leader of the

opposition on several occasions in this House have tended to raise that question—it has been said that these clauses have been framed and have been drawn up entirely by the Catholic members of the government. The insinuation has been made that the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State, and the Minister of Justice were the only Ministers that knew about these clauses. I have denied already, but without revealing a cabinet secret. I want to say now: that, without having been myself personally on any sub-committee, and without having any peculiar or special advantages for knowing what these clauses were to be and were, I knew personally every detail and every word of these clauses before they were brought down to parliament—both the first clause and the second clause. I knew that just as much as any Catholic member of the government. I am responsible for these clauses personally and individually and not alone by reason of the collective responsibility of every minister of the cabinet. It is an unfair and unjust aspersion upon the Prime Minister and upon his Catholic colleagues to insinuate for a moment that they ever tried to trick their colleagues, or to trick their party, or in any way to introduce a Bill that their party and their colleagues did not know of.

Sir, I will not detain the House much longer. I have talked already longer than I intended to do; but the condition of affairs which hon. gentlemen opposite seem to want to bring about reminds me of a word or two which I read in a letter of the right hon. leader of the Conservative government in England at the present time.

Mr. BLAIN. If the hon. gentleman would permit me, before he leaves that subject. My hon. friend has said that he knew all about the first clause as it was introduced by the Prime Minister, and all about the second clause. Would the hon. gentleman favour the House at this point with an explanation of the two clauses, and of the difference between them?

Mr. FISHER. No, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to waste my time on that just now. The clauses have been explained and discussed over and over again, and it is not my purpose to discuss them at the present time. I think I understand them both, and I am responsible for both as much as anybody else. This to my mind is a fair picture of what would go on in this country and what to a certain extent is going on, in consequence of the appeal of hon. gentlemen opposite:

The ear gets wearied with this unrelenting scream, the palate fated with these perpetual stimulants. And though one of Dr. Clifford's warmest admirers has invented in his honour the verb to 'Cliffordise,' I am, for my part, doubtful whether the style thus happily described is likely, even among the least critical members of the community, to produce more than a passing perturbation. Some there may