

table to see what is going on in the country to-day. There is no question but that this country to-day stands upon a volcano; a most dangerous question is agitating the people. Hon. gentlemen opposite may say that it is the fault of gentlemen on this side of the House, and I may say that it is the fault of gentlemen on the other side, but there is blame on both sides, if not in the House in the country. I say it is a most unfortunate state of things, and I am sorry to have to lay it at the door of my right hon. friend. It is all due to the policy which he followed in 1896. He let it be spread broadcast throughout the Dominion that he was opposed to the hierarchy and to any clerical influence. He said, or he let it be said that the Liberal party in Quebec had been fighting the clergy ever since that party existed, and that at least they had conquered the hierarchy. The right hon. gentleman obtained a great name for himself in the English provinces because of this and that is why they thought when they saw clause 16 of the original Bill that the Prime Minister had fallen from a very high place. It is that which has created the trouble we now hear of in the country.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. How did the Prime Minister fall down?

Mr. BERGERON. Because in the English provinces in 1896 the right hon. gentleman was put on a very high pedestal in view of the stand he took, and when he fell he fell from a higher position in their opinion, than in 1896, if he remained with the rest of us who desired to give justice to the minority of Manitoba.

Mr. BELAND. What do you consider to be his fault?

Mr. BERGERON. The newspapers which were full of compliments to the right hon. gentleman two or three years ago, now publish the most extraordinary statements about him, and say, he is not the man they expected him to be. That is what I call falling, in my estimation.

Mr. BELAND. In your estimation.

Mr. BERGERON. I am not speaking of myself; I am stating the reason why there is so much turmoil in the country to-day. I tell my hon. friend the Minister of Justice for his own justification, that when clause 16 was put in the Bill, whether with or without consultation with any one, and, I would not blame him if he had consultation, when it was put in the Bill he should not have dropped it. My hon. friends from Quebec who stand behind the Prime Minister were ready to accept clause 16 and now are ready to accept the amended clause which is almost the reverse of what was provided for in clause 16. My hon. friends from Quebec know very well that the amended clause which we are now discussing cannot be a

very good clause for the minority when the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) accepts it. The member for Brandon resigned because clause 16 was in the original Bill and now that he accepts the substituted clause it is quite plain that the new clause cannot be in favour of the Catholics of the Northwest. I tell the Minister of Justice that it would have been a great deal better for the country, and it would not be any worse for the minority in the Northwest Territories, if there had been nothing at all mentioned about schools in the Bill, than that the original clause should have been withdrawn and this one substituted. My impression is, and there are some good lawyers who say so, that the Northwest Territories would have come in confederation with the schools, not the schools they have to-day, but with the schools provided for in the Act of 1875 and which was never repealed, although some ordinances had been placed upon the regulations by the Northwest legislature. If my hon. friend had omitted the school clause and allowed the Act of 1875 to come into operation, the country would not have been in the condition it is in to-day; a condition which is very dangerous. For weeks and weeks we have been talking what?—talking nationality, talking religion when we have been living together for over 150 years. I hope in the interest of the country this will be the last occasion on which such a discussion will take place. I think this is the last question of the kind that will arise. Surely we are not going to buy another province? These two are the last that we can organize and I hope this is the last occasion on which we will have such a discussion and that henceforth we shall work like patriotic Canadians, working separately, on different sides of the House, but working sincerely in the united effort to do what we believe to be best in the interests of the country.

Mr. O. E. TALBOT (Bellechasse). Mr. Speaker, at this late hour of the night I do not intend to impose upon the House a very long speech, because it is with a very strong sense of shame and with a feeling of reluctance that I now rise in answer to the hon. gentleman (Mr. Bergeron) who has just taken his seat. After what has taken place in the province of Quebec since 1896 and when we know what the political record of that hon. gentleman is and when this hon. gentleman has the audacity to stand up in this House as the defender of the episcopate and the clergy of Quebec, I say that I rise to answer him now with a great sense of shame and reluctance. Every one in this House knows and sees through the hon. gentleman's motive at this moment—he wants to apologize to his leader because he is going to vote against his amendment; and it is a shameful apology that he has given to the House during the last hour. The hon. gentleman thinks