

part that certain Liberals who did not believe in the interference of the church in secular affairs, such as political matters, made a protest to Rome, and asked that a delegate should be sent from the Pope to regulate those affairs within the Catholic church in Canada.

Mr. BERGERON. What election was that ?

Mr. FISHER. It was the election of Mr. Langevin, in Charlevoix. The case was tried in the courts, and the interference of the church was proved. Somebody on the other side of the House a little while ago talked about proof—when was proof required, when was proof given, and so on. I think it was the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron). I cannot quote the exact volume of the reports in which that case appears ; but the hon. gentleman, who is a lawyer, can find it himself, and he will see that the proof was given. I do not think it was the only case, but it was the one I had in my mind at the moment. The Papal delegate was sent to Canada, not to interfere in political matters, or with legislation, but to prevent the interference in political matters of certain dignitaries of the church, whose influence it was well known had been exerted.

An hon. MEMBER. On whose behalf ?

Mr. FISHER. My hon. friend from Beauharnois can remember. My hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) can remember. I daresay the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster), if he searched his historical reminiscences, could remember. It was exerted on behalf of the Conservative government, who for long years carried a large majority of the constituencies in Quebec by reason of the assistance of the Catholic church, and only by reason of that assistance. Coming down to 1896, the hon. member for North Toronto was a member of the then Conservative government.

An hon. MEMBER. Sometimes.

Mr. FISHER. Sometimes. He knows that before the elections of 1896, there were certain changes in that government, and that the gentlemen who were chosen to fill the places naturally given to the province of Quebec were well known to be representatives of the ultramontane wing of the Conservative party of that province ; and it is not very much of a jump for me to suppose that the gentlemen who controlled the then Conservative party and the then Conservative government remembered what had occurred in days gone by, when Sir John Macdonald, having on the one hand the Tory Orange organization of the province of Ontario, and on the other hand the Catholic church organization of the province of Quebec, ruled this country for so many years by means of that unholy alliance.

Mr. FISHER.

Mr. BERGERON. For the good of the country.

Mr. FISHER. The hon. member says 'for the good of the country.' I can only point to the condition of the country in 1896. Surely the hon. gentleman must admit that it was for the evil of the country that the government were then carrying on the affairs of Canada.

Mr. SPROULE. Which element of the combination is the unholy one ?

Mr. FISHER. The combination was unholy, not either elements of it. It was the alliance, the combination of the two sets of people who held diametrically opposite views, who were joined together in an unholy alliance to keep the government in office. My hon. friend from East Grey rebelled against it himself, he found it quite beyond endurance ; and when, in 1896 an effort was made to coerce Manitoba by the government of which the member for North Toronto was a member, the member for East Grey and others rebelled against the alliance, and stepped out from the support of that party on that occasion.

Mr. SPROULE. Very much like the hon. member and his friends who fought against the church and took it into court ; now they are on the other side and are returning to the church. They want to appeal to both sides.

Mr. FISHER. I do not know what the hon. gentleman means by referring to the church. I take it that he has been following the lead given this afternoon by the leader of the opposition and the member for North Toronto, who pretend that in our present legislation we have been consulting the church, and going to the heads of the church for permission to introduce this legislation. That has been denied by the right hon. leader of the House, and denied by the statement of Monseigneur Sbarretti himself. Therefore the insinuation which the hon. gentleman makes and the implication suggested by the leader of the opposition and the member for North Toronto, are absolutely unfounded and untrue.

Mr. SPROULE. The hon. gentleman said he did not know what I meant: I was referring to his own statement when he told of the time his party took the church into court and fought the church ; but now they are entering into an alliance with the church and getting the church to help them.

Mr. FISHER. That is what I deny, the insinuation which the hon. gentleman and his colleagues are making is absolutely unfounded and has no justification in any form or shape. Mr. Speaker, in 1896 an effort was made to pursue that kind of policy, the effort was made by the then government to carry the province of Quebec in the same way. A little while ago the member for