

than once hinted at rather forcibly by my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster). There is and has been an attempt in this House to weaken the influence and disparage the judgment of the leader of the government (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). In days gone by we were accustomed to hear from the other side of the House at times, and in the press, descriptions of the right hon. leader of this government being little more than clay that was moulded in the hands of some stronger man or men in his cabinet. Now the tune is entirely changed. My hon. friend from North Toronto, describing him the other day, and he was very indignant about it, said that his conduct was like that of a Czar, who introduced a measure without consulting his colleagues, and who does whatever he pleases.

Mr. FOSTER. The strong men have departed.

Mr. PATERSON. Very well. I am dealing with the hon. gentlemen's estimate of the Prime Minister. The hon. gentleman complains that the Prime Minister alone is responsible for that Bill, and that his colleagues had, you might infer that from his statement, to accept it. Is it a fault in the eyes of the hon. member for North Toronto that we have a strong man at the head of the government? Does the hon. gentleman remember that a few years ago there was a government with which he was in perfect accord on all questions of policy, and on all intended measures that were to be introduced—thoroughly in accord, a united and happy party? But unfortunately the strong leader was not at their head, and the hon. gentleman and six others withdrew. Well, now, if we have got a strong man at the head of the government, and we have—

Mr. FOSTER. Some of you have found it so.

Mr. PATERSON—he ought to be very glad that such is the case. It is true that we have a strong man at the head of the government, but he never forgets to avail himself of the counsel of his colleagues, and to treat them with the utmost courtesy. We have a strong man, he has his views, and the very fact that he is known to be a strong man is the reason why his political opponents desire his overthrow and the overthrow of his government. If they can weaken the man that is a tower of strength to the party, then they weaken the party, and they hope to be able by that means to attain power. They say that he has lost the confidence of the Liberal party, that the Liberal party have lost the confidence of thousands and tens of thousands of their supporters on account of the introduction of this measure. It is true that many staunch and sterling men of character, integrity and

honour in the Liberal party, who, I believe, desire well for the Liberal party, have not been able to see eye to eye with us on this question. That has been a source of sorrow and of grief to us, as it must be to any one, for we value the esteem and friendship of our fellow citizens, especially of those who have given us their confidence in times gone by. If the prediction made by a gentleman at the Toronto meeting comes true that if this Bill is put through it should consign to political extinction the Prime Minister and his government and of every member of parliament that votes for it—if that be true—and the gentleman who made the prediction at this meeting no doubt thought he was speaking the truth, then are we not entitled to credit in voting for this Bill, believing in our conscience that it is our duty to do so, even in face of this threatened extinction? It seems to me there is nothing for us to be ashamed of in that.

Mr. KEMP. May I ask the hon. gentleman who said that at the Toronto meeting?

Mr. PATERSON. Will you take the 'World's' report for it? It says that in speaking to his motion, Mr. E. E. Thomson, K.C., said so and so, and wound up with these words:

If this thing were to be consummated, the righteous judgment of an outraged people should be the total and irrevocable political extinction of the government, and of every member of the parliament guilty of this betrayal of the public confidence.

And he concluded amid loud cheers. Well, he may be right, that may be so. But surely it must be admitted that if we proceed in face of warnings of that kind, we ought to be given credit, at any rate, for believing that we are doing what is right. Another gentleman spoke at that meeting, and he uttered a sentiment that I think was hardly proper and which I regretted to see coming from him. He said that the introduction of this Bill tended to promote racial and religious strife. According to this gentleman, that could only be averted by withdrawing this Bill and then this vexed question of race and religion would be eliminated altogether. He said:

Our one great national problem is to unite our various creeds and nationalities in one common patriotism. If we fail now to do our utmost to insure the unity of race and creed in the new provinces, we shall be guilty of deliberate treason to the commonwealth. We are here to-night to ask the Ottawa politicians and the Quebec ecclesiastics to mind their own business.

Mr. KEMP. Who said that, may I inquire?

Mr. PATERSON. I did not wish to give his name, but I find this in the 'Mail' report of Mr. Willison's speech at Toronto.