

am not discussing their motive or purpose, but the line of separation is religion, and no one can contest that. I say that inevitably if the right hon. the First Minister had to retire from office on this question and my hon. friend the leader of the opposition were called on to form a government to settle this school question in the Northwest, he could not unite the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) and the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) and the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron). There is nothing wrong in saying that. We all know that these gentlemen have their differences on this question and could not agree. I say that the government then would have to be formed on religious lines, and that would be the greatest calamity that could occur to the Dominion of Canada.

What does the man on the street say about this statement? Simply this, that according to the Minister of Finance, if the Roman Catholics of this country want anything, whether it is constitutional or not, and if the government refuse it, no government can be formed that will have any Catholics in it. The ex-Minister of the Interior says the same thing. Let me quote what he said, 'Hansard,' page 3259:

I am very much inclined to think, Mr. Speaker, that they will not be able to convince me. I do not think they would be able to convince me that it would not be better that the legislature of the Northwest Territories should be free. Now, what are we going to do? We are face to face with an absolutely irreconcilable state of affairs. My hon. friend the Minister of Finance put it very well the other evening. He said: What are you going to do? what are you going to decide? The King's government must be carried on; the business of the country must be carried on; and there is only one of two ways in which this question can be decided. The Protestant people of Canada can say to the Roman Catholic people: You cannot convince us, we cannot convince you, but there are more of us than there are of you, and we are going to vote you down. I put aside a proposition of that kind. There is no man in this government who would contemplate attempting to carry out a proposition of that kind if he had the power. Least of all would my hon. friend who leads the opposition desire to see a proposition of that kind carried out, no matter what his views on the merits of the question might be. Then, what are you going to do? What is the position of affairs going to be? You cannot make a political issue on these questions either for the members of this House or for the inhabitants of the Dominion of Canada; and even if you did—as my hon. friend the Minister of Finance very well said: if those who thought in this House as he did combined with him, and if the result of their efforts were to drive the right hon. gentleman from office on this question, all that my hon. friend the Minister of Finance said the other night, and much more, would be true. No greater political misfortune could happen to hon. gentlemen opposite than that they should be called upon to take office under such circumstances. Suppose it happened. Every man who knows the political history of Canada knows that we might fight about this question year in and year out for years, the political and financial progress of the country might be para-

Mr. TAYLOR.

lyzed, the business of the country would be blocked by the condition of affairs, and after it was all done, we should be simply where we had started, and the people would have to come together on this question and compromise their differences.

Now, I would like to inquire where the Finance Minister and the ex-Minister of the Interior got their information that if the Prime Minister were driven from power on this question nothing but a Protestant government could be formed? I think I find a solution of that question in the leading organ of the right hon. the Prime Minister, published in the city of Quebec, 'L'Evenement.' It gives the story of the negotiations of the Prime Minister with the Apostolic delegate. It says:

Preparatory to the introduction of the Bill Sir Wilfrid Laurier had, unknown to important members of his government, many interviews with Monseigneur Sbarretti. The representative of His Holiness accepted at these meetings the original separate school clause, and wished Sir Wilfrid success with it. When the other ministers saw what Sir Wilfrid proposed certain of them balked, and Mr. Fielding threatened to resign, in imitation of Mr. Sifton. Sir William Mulock was also 'frightened,' and was going to drop out. Then Sir Wilfrid announced that he had given his word to the representative of the Holy See that the law should be as proposed, adding that if the others resigned he also, under the circumstances, would have to go. Messrs. Bourassa and Lavergne here appeared upon the scene and urged Sir Wilfrid to stand by his proposition against the fanatics.

The fanatics, according to this paper, are the Minister of Finance, the ex-Minister of the Interior and Sir William Mulock.

Mr. ARMAND LAVERGNE. I beg my hon. friend's pardon. In the country the fanatics are understood to be the hon. member for South York (Mr. W. F. Maclean) and other hon. gentlemen on that side of the House.

Mr. TAYLOR. I am reading from my hon. friend's paper.

Mr. ARMAND LAVERGNE. 'L'Evenement' is a Tory paper.

Mr. TAYLOR (reading):

Thereupon Sir Wilfrid prayed for an interview with the Apostolic Delegate, and told that dignitary that the fanatics would put a knife to his throat if he persisted in pressing the clauses. He added to Monseigneur Sbarretti: I shall do what your Excellency tells me. If you believe that I should fight the opposition I will do that. If you think it is better to compromise and thus save as much as possible of separate schools, I will do that. He added that he alone could do anything with the fanatics, and that if he were to resign because of the Bill Mr. Fielding would be called in and he would give nothing at all.

Who is the fanatic now, I ask my hon. friend?

Mr. ARMAND LAVERGNE. If the hon. gentleman is quoting the words of my hon.