

tional clauses in the Bill as explained in their modified form by the premier in the House the other day.

Now Sir, that prophesy of the Montreal 'Witness' is pretty nearly correct. It is not absolutely correct because the ex-minister (Mr. Sifton) did not wait until next week and he most certainly did not make a strong speech. With these two trifling exceptions the 'Witness' article is true. When one considers the position of the ex-Minister of the Interior it reminds us of the cartoon which was widely circulated throughout this country some years ago at the expense of another politician; it was a very pretty picture with the legend at the bottom: The cat came back.

We had the privilege of hearing the ex-minister this afternoon and you remember the excuse he gave. He was perfectly prepared to accept the present clauses, but he feared the original clauses because he thought they might be liable to introduce some of these ordinances of an ephemeral character that had come and gone years ago, and he also feared that peradventure a university might be founded in years to come in the distant Northwest, and when founded it might lead to dissensions between majorities and minorities in that unhappy country. One feels inclined to protest against such an affront to the intelligence of the members of this House, as for a gentleman who occupies such an exalted position to venture to come before parliament with such an excuse as this. We cannot be very much surprised if the majority in this country are inclined to think that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth has not been told them by hon. gentlemen opposite in their account of the effect of this Bill. If further confirmation of such suspicions were necessary, one has but to look at the arguments advanced by hon. gentlemen opposite in support of their Bill. As I have said, the burden rests on a government which brings down a Bill to show good and sufficient reason to justify its passage.

Let us look at the arguments advanced by the leading gentlemen on the opposite side of the House who have spoken. The right hon. the Prime Minister spoke first, and assuming that a gentleman of his ability made the best argument that could be made in favour of the Bill, let us see what his statements were. His first justification for it was, because of the cleavage between Roman Catholics and Protestants; a cleavage on matters of dogma. Now, if the statement of the hon. Minister of Finance is true, what earthly difference does such a cleavage make? Let the Roman Catholic children be instructed by their priests from half-past three to four and the children of any Protestant denomination be instructed by their ministers from

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half past three to four, and where is there any necessity of referring to a cleavage in dogma, and how can that affect the question? But even if it did affect it, what is the meaning of cleavage in dogma between Roman Catholics and Protestants? Roman Catholics and Protestants are not all the people of this country. The Minister of the Interior is perhaps responsible for other complications that may arise when we come to consider cleavage in doctrine; because I believe the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) will object to some of the settlers in the Northwest being classed as adherents of the Protestant faith. Where will you put the Doukhobors, the Mormons, the members of the Greek Church? Are they Protestants? If the only cleavage to be considered is a cleavage in doctrine, between two bodies, perhaps something may be said for separate schools; but if the cleavage between Mormons and Protestants is as broad as the cleavage between Protestants and Roman Catholics—and I trust that it is broader—or if the cleavage between Protestants and Doukhobors is as broad—and I believe it is just as broad—then why should there be separate schools instead of national schools? The Hon. George Brown, whose speeches in the Senate have often been quoted in admiration, in objecting to separate schools, pointed out that if they were allowed, Anglicans and Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists were just as much entitled to them as any other class of the community; and hon. gentlemen opposite who are sufficiently instructed in theology will bear me out when I say that the difference between the high church Anglican and the Roman Catholic is much less than the difference between the high church Anglican and the adherent of the denominations commonly known as Protestant.

Then the hon. gentleman said: Give the Northwest the same rights as are given to Quebec and Ontario. Why did the hon. gentleman say that? In the British North America Act there was no confederation of Quebec and Ontario. There was a confederation of four provinces—Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were not given separate schools, Ontario and Quebec were not given separate schools, by the Act of Union; and when these provinces are coming into a partnership in which there are seven provinces, and only two have separate schools, on what ground can the hon. gentleman say that as a matter of right and justice, these new provinces are entitled to the special privileges which the two provinces have rather than the five provinces which lack those special privileges, if such they be. Besides, it must be borne in mind—and I am trying to speak with all calmness and frankness in calling the attention of hon. gentlemen to the views of