

view, and with greater breadth of mind. Monseigneur Sbarretti, in discussing with Mr. Rogers the interests of the Catholics of Manitoba, was not only acting within his rights, but was fulfilling his duty. As I said, I have not the slightest knowledge of what took place between them; but the idea of hon. gentlemen getting up in this House and talking about a conspiracy of the hierarchy, about the dark and sinister designs of the church, because a member of the local legislature of Manitoba has thought fit to hold an interview with the representative of the highest spiritual power in our church, I say that it is entirely unworthy of the dignity of a member of this House and the representative of a free people.

Hon. PETER WHITE (North Renfrew). I am sure that if the object of my hon. friend from Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) was to raise this discussion out of the rut into which he says it has fallen, the region of race and religion he has signally failed in doing so; because during all the long years in which I have sat in parliament I do not think I ever listened to a more inflammatory speech than that to which the hon. member for Labelle has just treated this House. For my own part, speaking as a Protestant and as a representative of an Ontario constituency, I have to say, and I think the House will agree with me, that I have not the slightest objection to the bringing of a Papal delegate here to superintend the religious affairs of the Church of Rome. For my own part I have a great admiration for the moral teaching of the Church of Rome, although I do not believe in its tenets. But I do say as a citizen of this country that when the allegation is made that the Papal delegate, who comes here properly enough to fulfil the purpose for which he was brought—though the manner in which he was brought might not be acceptable to many of us who sit on this side of the House—though he came here properly enough to supervise the affairs of the church of which he is a distinguished dignitary; but I say that when it is alleged by the newspapers and by a leading member of the government of Manitoba, that that gentleman has interfered in a matter that does not belong to the domain of the Church of Rome at all, then I say that the people of this country, and at all events those of us who sit on this side of the House, have a right to complain. Now, Sir, what are the facts in relation to this matter? I am not here to relate the facts, because I do not know them. I accept to the fullest extent the statement made by the right hon. leader of the government that he had no knowledge of these negotiations going on between the Papal delegate and the representatives of the province of Manitoba; but I say that if these negotiations did go on according to the allegation that has been made, then Monseigneur Sbarretti ought not to remain in this country a single

Mr. BOURASSA.

hour longer than those gentlemen who secured his presence here can manage to effect his recall by communicating with his superior in Rome. I think it is their duty, it is the duty of those forty members of this parliament who secured his presence here, and especially is it the duty of the leader of the government, at the earliest possible moment, at once to communicate with the head of the church in Rome and secure the recall of that gentleman—if, I say, it be proven that these allegations made with regard to him are true.

Now, Sir, I want to say one word with reference to a statement made by the hon. member for Labelle respecting the hon. leader of the opposition. The hon. member for Labelle said that the hon. leader of the opposition had no opinions of his own, that his opinions were simply moulded by those who were following him in this House. I think, Sir, it ill becomes any supporter of the right hon. leader of this government to make a statement of that kind with regard to the leader of the opposition, when we know as a matter of fact, from the mouth of the right hon. gentleman the leader of the government himself, that his policy with regard to those important Bills which are now under discussion, was changed and modified to a material degree by the pressure of his followers in this House. Sir, I am sorry that I have been obliged to rise upon a question of this kind. But I thought it my duty to do so, and I consider I hold moderate views both political and religious. I have no objection to any man's political or religious views, but I do think that it is an unfortunate thing that an hon. gentleman like the hon. member for Labelle should take the course which he has taken here to-day and that he should accuse hon. gentlemen on this side of the House of endeavouring to inflame the public mind in this country.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. WHITE. I hear some hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House laugh. What was the object which my hon. friend from South York (Mr. Maclean) had in making the proposition that he made to hon. gentlemen opposite? He had a right to call in question the conditions that exist upon the other side of the House. He had a right to express his opinion that the failure of the right hon. the leader of the government in filling the vacancy in the portfolio of the Interior and in filling the position which has practically been vacant in the Public Works Department and he had the right to assume that the failure of the right hon. the leader of the government to fill these positions was because he feared public opinion in the country. It was, I assume, because he took the ground that the right hon. the leader of the government fears to open any constituency in the province of Ontario, or in any of the English speaking provinces at the present time,