

The Conservative party is not united in opposition to the principle of separate schools.

We know that.

Taking it altogether there is probably a larger proportion of its membership favourable to educational concessions to the religious minorities than there is in the Liberal party.

I wish their representatives in the House would show that. The 'Gazette' continues:

In the province of Quebec, where the concession is usually made to the Protestant, there is not and has not been from the majority any call for 'nationalizing' the school system, nor any objection on principle to the manner in which the minority uses its privileges.

The 'Gazette' goes on to say of the Protestant people of the province of Quebec:

They are not at all excited over the prospect of separate schools being maintained in Alberta and Saskatchewan. They are not even alarmed at the hierarchy being behind the movement.

That comes from the leading organ of the Conservative party in the city of Montreal. It is not depending on votes, it is not depending on pap or assistance in any way whatever, but it is giving expression to the feelings and views of the Protestant minority in the province of Quebec. Perhaps my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) will recognize the authority of the Montreal 'Star.' It is a newer recruit to the Conservative ranks than the Montreal 'Gazette,' but it is more devoted just at the present moment, and it has been more devoted in the near past. The Montreal 'Star' cannot be claimed to be anything but an out and out Tory sheet, and here is what the Montreal 'Star' says:

But with the effort made in some quarters to bring on a religious civil war—

Mark you Mr. Speaker; mark the words 'religious civil war.'

But with the effort made in some quarters to bring on a religious civil war over these interwoven western questions, we have not the slightest sympathy. As 'Ralph Connor' said last night, to the Young Men's Christian Association, the busy men of the west hesitate 'to stir up that monster, that demon, race strife,' and, that being true, what right have we of the east to force so disastrous a quarrel upon them? The question of whether or not the educational clauses as they are now in the Autonomy Bills, should become law, can be discussed with a sober sense of the gravity of the subject and the dangers that surround it. We can avoid inflammatory off-shoots of the debate, instead—as is the short-sighted and unpatriotic custom in some quarters—eagerly seeking out and emphasizing them.

I think it might be well for the Ontario newspapers to take that to heart and to say that to the Protestants of Ontario. The 'Star' continues:

With all seriousness, we believe that a greater matter than the school question is at stake, and that is the future of Canada as a British colony. Our people are composed—shall we say, by the will of Providence—of two races

MR. FISHER.

and two religions, having regard only to the larger divisions. We must dwell together in mutual harmony and toleration if we are to dwell together at all in the peace which is the only possible condition productive of progress and prosperity. Neither race and neither religion can wholly have its way. We must give and take. No one knew this better, having learned it through years of bitter experience, than the fathers of confederation. Confederation itself was the child of conciliation and compromise.

Coercion was it? Was it the child of coercion and Toryism?

If the finest group of patriots whom Canada has yet produced had not then come together and sunk their individual predilections in the common interest, we would never have had a Dominion of Canada. What we would have had, in all probability, would have been a northern tier of states in the American union.

Here is the warning:

And if the old quarrel is to come up—if the old intense religious antagonisms are again to be excited into activity—it is impossible to say that this danger has wholly passed.

Is the policy of the hon. gentlemen opposite going to lead to annexation?

Every day that the controversy, which is now raging over purely religious differences, lasts, we can see the two camps into which our people are divided becoming more distinct and more perilously moved by mutual suspicion and distrust.

Again the Montreal 'Star' says:

In the sixties we saw two provinces facing each other at Ottawa, and the wheels of government stopped. Sir John Macdonald, that master of conciliation, was there, but he was powerless. Nothing but the patriotism of the men on both sides—of George Brown and Sir George Cartier, as well as Sir John Macdonald and Sir A. T. Galt—saved the situation. But the presence of other Canadian provinces gave them an opportunity which does not now exist. As we said yesterday, there is no larger area to-day in which we can drown our troubles except the American union. We may easily find ourselves, then, with the old disease, but with no possible remedy short of suicide.

Will the hon. gentlemen opposite take that to heart. The 'Star' says:

Then we should never forget that racial and religious questions are dangerous topics for us to stir up in this country. We must face them at times; but there is no necessity for keeping them before the public, week after week, largely for purposes of party agitation. Canada has surely suffered enough in the past over her racial and religious divisions without voluntarily bringing on another period of unrest and rancour just when we should be bending all our united and harmonious efforts to 'building up the west.'

Sir, I say, take and ponder over these quotations from the Conservative newspapers in the city of Montreal. Now I want to read an extract from the Montreal 'Witness' of April 11th, and I want hon. gentlemen opposite who object to separate schools