

stone is probably one of the most intensely Protestant parts of Ontario, and the hon. gentleman was taking advantage of the fact to crawl down to the Protestant end of the riding and make his Protestant appeal there that he did not dare make in the township of Floss where he was coquetting with the Catholic vote.

Hon. SYDNEY A. FISHER (Minister of Agriculture). Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) sat down a few minutes ago, he stated that probably he would be accused of making an inflammatory speech. I can only take it that a guilty conscience enabled him to read the minds of those who listened to the speech he made for certainly he was right in describing it as an inflammatory speech. The hon. gentleman, in that speech, certainly tried to inflame the minds of those in this country who distrust or dislike the Catholic church and the Catholic religion. The whole tenor of the hon. gentleman's speech was such as to raise Protestant prejudice and Protestant feeling against this government because he implied that this government, led by a Roman Catholic, was in constant touch with the Roman Catholic church in regard to secular affairs in this country. The hon. member himself on former occasions has complained, that he and his government when he was in the government, was subjected to similar attacks, not to similar attacks by Liberals or by those opposed to him, but similar attacks from the ranks of his own party when the late member for West York (Mr. Wallace) and the present hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) separated themselves from the Conservative party ceased their support of the Conservative government in 1896 and tried, as members of the government then said, to raise Protestant and English speaking feeling against the government at that time. Sir, I would like the hon. member for North Toronto to recall a speech he made in 1896, when, replying to an interruption from the hon. member for East Grey, he used these words, and I think perhaps he will admit that when he uttered these broad-minded words he was more of a statesman than he is to-day in making what he himself has characterized as an inflammatory speech. What did the hon. gentleman then say? He was not then representing a strong Protestant constituency in the Protestant province of Ontario, but he was a member of the then government of Sir Charles Tupper, representing the maritime provinces, and he said this, referring to a speech which the hon. member for East Grey had quoted or alluded to as his authority:

If made by Archbishop Langevin or if made by ten thousand archbishops, the hon. gentleman would yet have no ground in logic or in truth for making the assertion he made here the other day, which was, not that Archbishop Langevin did not agree with the ordinance, but

that the government held it in abeyance because the clergy did not approve of it.

Let him mark these words and let the House mark these words and see how well they apply to the speech which the hon. gentleman made a few moments ago.

This assertion, carried as broadly as newspapers will carry his speech, was meant, and will have the effect of raising prejudice and opposition to this legislation amongst the Protestant people of this country, and fan those fires which my hon. friends there and my hon. friends here so much deplore.

I hope the hon. gentleman will take these words to heart and act upon them instead of acting in the way his conduct shows he wishes to act this afternoon. The hon. gentleman has based the whole of his attack upon this government and upon my right hon. friend the leader of the government (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) on implications and assumptions, on implications and assumptions which are not borne out by the interview of Mr. Rogers and which are still less borne out, but are in fact absolutely refuted by the statement issued by the Apostolic delegate. The hon. gentleman quoted some words from Mr. Rogers' statement and he pointed out that something might be implied by that statement. I venture to say, Sir, that anybody who reads the statement of Mr. Rogers, in Winnipeg, will say that there is a great deal more implied in that statement than there is actually contained in it, and that there is an evident intention by the wording of the statement to make implications and insinuations that the gentleman who gave that statement did not dare to come out and state as matters of fact. These implications and insinuations are not founded on facts, but they are false to the record and they are untrue. Sir, the very first thing that would strike anybody in reading that statement, the first thing which I confess, myself, impressed me was that Mr. Rogers had met the ablegate here in Ottawa. The statement contains these words:

During that interview we presented the claims of the province as urgently and strongly as possible. In reply Sir Wilfrid said that if we would be good enough to remain in Ottawa for three or four days he would again send for us and would then be in a position to give us an answer.

It is 'we,' 'us.' Then it continues:

In three days' time, on February 20, a letter was received from Monseigneur Sbarretti, asking for a conference.

Who would have supposed for a moment that that did not mean asking 'us' for a conference; but, as a matter of fact, it was not those men who were asked for a conference. It was simply a private letter from the delegate asking one of these gentlemen, an old friend of his who had discussed this question before with him, for a private interview. The implication and the