

he can swallow himself and cover his tracks from the public eye. The hon. gentleman now stands up as the defender of the episcopate of the province of Quebec; but what did we see this afternoon? We saw him applauding the abuse that fell from the lips of the hon. member for South York (Mr. W. F. Maclean). Thank God, Mr. Speaker, the clergy and the episcopate of the province of Quebec have not fallen so low as to require the defence of the hon. gentleman. The clergy of Quebec stand to-day, as they have always stood, highly respected and loved by every French Canadian and even by every Protestant of the province of Quebec and other provinces. What was the use of the hon. gentleman going so far back into ancient history as to talk about the elections of 1896? Is that the question before the House to-day? He wanted to know what was the reason the Papal ablegate was sent to Canada? No man knows the reason better than the hon. gentleman. He spoke of a certain document to which the name of the hon. Minister of Justice was attached. He knows where that document was prepared. He knows that it was prepared in the city of Quebec by two leading Tories, Mr. Chapais and Mr. L. P. Pelletier, who imposed that document on the episcopate. I remember very well, in the election of 1896, when the hon. leader of this House was in the parish of St. Raphael in my county, when Mr. Landry, Mr. Pelletier and Mr. Chapais came with that document before a couple of thousand of my electors, and asked the right hon. gentleman to sign it. What was his answer? He said: Go with that document to your leaders and get their signatures to it, and come to me afterwards, and I will then tell you what I will do. What was done to get some gentlemen to sign that document? I remember when Dr. Vaillancourt was fighting the battles of the Liberal party in the county of Dorchester adjoining mine, Mr. Pelletier, the great friend of the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron), went to Dr. Vaillancourt and said to him, 'if you sign this document, we will allow you to be elected by acclamation.' Dr. Vaillancourt signed it, and the next day or the day after he had an opponent. What was the use of Liberals signing a document? Did we make anything as a party by doing so? Was not the clergy against us from beginning to end in 1896? Did we gain any votes in the province of Quebec by signing that document? On the contrary. What was the reason the people of Quebec as well as the people of every other province rose in their might on that occasion and carried the Liberals into power? It was because homes were deserted and windows and doors barred up, and where there had been happiness before there was nothing but wilderness and desolation. It was because

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of the strong feeling that the people had that a change had to come. There was distress for the farmers everywhere, and the people could see no prospect under Conservative rule except what had happened for eighteen or twenty years before—our people leaving Canada and going to the other side of the line for the bread which they were unable to earn on their own soil. That was the principal reason. My hon. friend from Beauharnois wants to involve the clergy of the province of Quebec again in political conflicts when we are leaving them alone. When he says there is no analogy between the fact that Archbishop Taché was brought from Rome to Canada and the fact that of the Papal ablegate being brought from Rome to Canada, we all know that there is an analogy in one respect. Archbishop Taché, before he died, left a letter, which is a portion of his will, in which he said that he had come to Canada at the request of the leader of the Conservative party; and he said: 'Promises were made to me, and the cause of my premature death at this moment is that those promises have never been fulfilled, and I have been deceived by the leaders of the Conservative party.' That is where the difference is, and that is where there is no analogy between the two cases. The Pope was not deceived at the time we remonstrated against the straight, direct intervention of the clergy in political contests in the province of Quebec. Though we were Liberals, we were just as good Catholics as my hon. friend, and why were we damned from some pulpits because we voted as Liberals? Why was it that in some of the pulpits some men went so far as to say: 'Hell is red, and heaven is blue; vote for the blue, and you are all right, but if you vote for the rouge, you are damned, and damned for ever.' Was it not time that the people of this country should have some protection from this kind of thing, so that we might vote as free men for the party in whom we had confidence. I am sorry to have to refer to these matters, and I would not have done so if the hon. member for Beauharnois had not dragged them on to the floor of this House. The hon. gentleman says he has been here for twenty-four years; but he forgot what happened between the twentieth and the twenty-fourth years.

Mr. BERGERON. It would have been twenty-eight years then.

Mr. TALBOT. He had time to reflect. One of the strong arguments that elected him in the last election in the county of Beauharnois was that his opponent was a Protestant and an Englishman. I do not say that the hon. gentleman used that argument, but his heelers used it. We saw it and read it in the papers at the time.