

28, from a gentleman in Regina and I have also another letter dated April 18, from another gentleman living in the Northwest Territories. I think it might be well to give quotations from these letters just to put that hon. gentleman right in this respect. One of these letters states:

As far as the people out here are concerned, there is very general satisfaction with the Bill in all particulars, and I presume we ought to be the ones who are most directly interested and know best about it.

The other letter says:

All here are satisfied with the school clause in the Autonomy Bill, even Conservatives are finding very little fault.

These letters are from gentlemen who have been living in the Northwest for twenty-two years, two prominent men in the Territories. I would also read a further extract for the benefit of the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) in regard to a matter upon which he seemed to be a little misty last night. I refer to the question of school books. The writer of this letter says:

We sell the same books to both schools.

This is a long letter and I need not read it all through as it would only be taking up the time of the House. But, he incidentally mentions in this letter that they sell to both parties the same school books. I trust that that will set at rest the mind of the hon. member for East Grey, and that he will be able to keep his seat now until I get through. I was very glad also to hear from the hon. member for Haldimand (Mr. Lalor). He stated—I think I have his words here exactly—that there was no more independent paper in Canada than the 'Witness,' that it was a very independent paper. I have the 'Witness' here.

Mr. LALOR. I did not make that statement. I never mentioned the 'Witness.'

Mr. T. MARTIN. The Montreal 'Witness'?

Mr. LALOR. I never mentioned it at all.

Mr. T. MARTIN. What paper did you mention?

Mr. LALOR. The 'Farmers' Sun.'

An hon. MEMBER. Oh.

Mr. LALOR. 'Hansard' shows it. Read 'Hansard.'

Mr. T. MARTIN. I think I heard every word that was said. I think he mentioned the 'Witness' also. However, I will take that back. I do not want to use the hon. gentleman's words in a way that should not be done, but I will read an extract from the 'Witness.' I know that the people of western Ontario believe that the

Mr. T. MARTIN.

'Witness' is as reliable a paper from a Protestant standpoint as we have in Canada. It is an old established paper and it seems to have run in a very independent course for many years. This paper is dated April 25th. A clergyman writing to the paper on the school question says this:

To the editor of the 'Witness':

Sir,—As a reader of the 'Witness' from boyhood I am very much surprised at your attitude on the Autonomy Bill. You seem to think that too much stress is being laid on provincialism by us in Ontario.

Well, I am afraid there has been, and I think that some of the members of the opposition in this House, when they look over their speeches a couple of years hence will come to the conclusion that they have gone too far in that direction. The letter continues:

Yet who were they who refused to enter into legislative union at confederation, and insisted on a federal union? Who were the ones who at that time demanded provincial rights in certain matters, of which education was one? The Roman Catholics of Quebec were the opponents then of a legislative union. They were then advocates of provincialism, but what they claimed for themselves at that time they now are unwilling to grant the people of the west.

No, Mr. Editor, the people of Ontario are true to the principles of confederation. It is the people of Quebec who have gone back on their principles. To my mind there has been no more audacious and treacherous act in our history than the attempt to fasten separate schools upon the west. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as a faithful child of the Roman Catholic church, has determined before he retires from public life to do all he can for his church.

We do not want a second Quebec in this Dominion. One 'solid Quebec' is sufficient.

For this reason I am extremely sorry to find that the 'Witness' is not on the side of the freedom and liberties of the people on this occasion.

The editor of the 'Witness' replies to that letter in an article headed 'Is it treachery,' and he says:

That it was the Roman Catholics who opposed a legislative union when the provinces of British North America came together, and insisted not only on a provincial autonomy for Quebec, but demanded that the interests of education should be under provincial jurisdiction; so that it is they, and not the people of Ontario, who have gone back on the principles of confederation; what they then claimed for themselves they are now unwilling to grant to the people of the west. Is this quite fair to them? They certainly did demand to control their own educational system through the provincial government, but they did not claim to control the education of the minority. The minority was to control its own educational system and has always done so. The majority would probably have acted rightly by the minority, even if they had been free to act otherwise, but at confederation the minority demanded that their educational freedom should be guaranteed by the national compact, and so it was. Now when new provinces are being created the Roman Catholics ask for the minorities here, what