

that they were not awake to the importance of this question, because they dispersed incontinently over the country, and the Major-General commanding the militia went, I think, to British Columbia. That is the sort of attention which the government gave at that time to this very important matter.

Now, Sir, there is a part of this subject which I wish to deal with in all fairness and frankness, and I regret that I shall have to deal with it somewhat in detail as the only effective means at my command to prevent a great injury being done. I shall be obliged to give to the House, evidence that my right hon. friend is not rightly stating the case in the speech from the Throne, when he says: that the entire people of Canada are of one mind upon this subject. I am compelled, with regret, to give to the Prime Minister evidence which leads me to the conviction that that statement is not founded in fact, and that there was a grave difference of opinion on this matter which is so vitally important to the British Empire, among the very members of the cabinet themselves. A minister who has again and again shown his great authority and influence with this government, adopted a position of entire and unqualified hostility to anything being done by Canada towards helping Great Britain in this crisis. We find that this minister was apparently not only able to use sufficient influence with the Premier to induce him to make the declaration, that he would take no action in the matter; but that this same minister was able to draw to this aid a considerable number of the supporters of the right hon. gentleman in this House, who followed him in his position of antagonism to Great Britain. Sir, there is no advantage to Canada in avoiding that frank dealing with this question which I believe to be absolutely necessary in order to remedy it. I need not say to the House that the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte) is the person to whom I allude. I draw attention to the fact that he had just come from France, a country that unhappily at this moment is in the most bitter antagonism against England. He had just come from that country which daily through its press, and through its public men, is declaring the most enthusiastic sympathy with the Boers. He had just come from a country that is denouncing England, that is gloating over every misfortune to our arms and rejoicing at every triumph of the enemy. It appears to me that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte) became imbued with the atmosphere by which he was surrounded, and so let us hear his first declaration after his arrival in Canada. At a banquet given to Mr. Herbet, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte) said:

I return from France, where I received the care that French science can give, and I return

to Canada more French than ever. I am a minister in a British government, and I have the right to say that I am French. But I tell you this: if to declare myself a British subject would prevent me from being French, then I would refuse to call myself a British subject. We make no threats, as the ballot-box is our best defence. We are happy and free under British institutions, but France is always my dear country.

I am not going to express my own opinion of what I think of such a statement made by a Canadian cabinet minister. If the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte) said he was a French Canadian, and would always remain a French Canadian to the core, we would all sympathize with him; but when he had just come from a country which was exhibiting the most bitter hostility to everything that was British; to announce that he would not be a British subject if he could not be French first, was to make a declaration which I will not myself characterize, but which I will leave it to *Le Soleil* of Quebec, the organ of the Prime Minister, to tell the hon. gentleman what was thought of it. *Le Soleil* of December 11, says:

What good comes of certain of our public men claiming to be French in the first place and British subjects afterwards. To think so may be permitted, but to write and proclaim such sentiments is criminal and foolish provocation.

When the organ of the right hon. gentleman in the province of Quebec expresses such sentiments in regard to this language of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte), is it any wonder that the people who are not under the immediate influence which surrounds and pervades the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte) have taken a less favourable view of his position. Sir, it would be impossible for any minister of the Crown, it would be impossible for any man in Canada to have taken an attitude of more determined, more inveterate or more undying hostility to any aid or assistance being given by the Canadian government to the British arms, than this hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte) steadily pursued. *La Patrie* of Montreal, the organ and property of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte) or of his family; *La Patrie*, which he declares to be the organ of this government, in the Montreal district, at all events, on October 10 used this language:

Not one of the speakers who addressed the meeting at St. Liboire had the energy to denounce the dangerous policy adopted by the chief of the Conservative party during the last few weeks, namely, the participation of Canada in the war of the Transvaal, and, consequently, in all others that might break out in Europe or elsewhere. M. Taillon, M. Beaubien and M. Bergeron constitute themselves the lay figures of Toryism and of the Orangism of Ontario, that is to say, of the most fanatical and baneful influences that exist in this country.

We denounce them in the name of sound public opinion. We ask of our fellow-citizens to brand them as criminal cowards.