

offensive to the religion of our Roman Catholic brethren. I once received a personal letter from a gentleman connected with the French press to the effect that such a service was not any good to them; but for the reason that it was a private letter, I did not feel at liberty to send it to any person in charge of the service. This service is in the hands of the press irrespective of politics, and any criticisms of its character should be communicated to the gentlemen who have charge of it. If it commends itself to the press generally, and I think it does, we are only too happy to subsidise it. But we have nothing to do with the character of the despatches.

Mr. BERGERON. I do not mean to say that there was anything injurious in the news; but we got news which was not true, and it was only by reading the newspapers that we received eight or ten days afterwards that we found that it was not true. This showed that the service was not properly controlled. How did the newspapers get the news before we subsidised this service?

Mr. FIELDING. They got it through the American Associated Press. The rich American papers controlled the whole business, appointed the correspondents and fixed the tolls, and our papers were furnished at low rates, with so much of the news as they chose to take. The news was very often coloured with anti-British feeling, to put it mildly. There were only two papers in Canada, the Toronto 'Globe' and the Montreal 'Star,' which had their own cable news from England.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I would like to call the attention of my hon. friend to the statement he made a moment ago concerning the character of certain news which is to be found in our French newspapers. Does he say that that news comes from the associated press?

Mr. BERGERON. I have been told so.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am sure it does not. It does not come from London at all but comes direct or through the American associated press.

Mr. BERGERON. I was told the contrary, and was told that by these gentlemen that they were not only paying their share for this press service but paying it for news which was contrary to the truth.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. If there is any religious news of interest to the Canadian people, such as news from Rome regarding the appointments of bishops and other ecclesiastical matters of interest, and if any one in Rome will give that news to the Canadian press, our newspapers would be only too glad to disseminate it.

Mr. LEMIEUX. As a reader of the press and as having been a member of the Press

Association, I am somewhat interested in newspaper affairs and follow very closely the despatches sent by the correspondent in London, Mr. Robertson, the brother of Mr. John Ross Robertson, of Toronto. From my personal knowledge, I can assure my hon. friend that he never, to my recollection sent anything which could be found objectionable by any race or creed. As regards news which appears sometimes in our press and to which objection may be taken, my attention was called by one of the highest dignitaries of the church in the province of Quebec to some items which appeared in a newspaper with which I am somewhat connected.

Mr. BERGERON. The 'Nationaliste'?

Mr. LEMIEUX. No, nor 'L'Action Sociale.' I refer to 'Le Canada' of which I am vice-president. This dignitary pointed out that the item in question had not been taken from the British press nor had it come through any service we have in England, but was taken from newspapers published on the continent, which are opposed to the Catholic church. My hon. friend has never been on the staff of a newspaper or he would know that the scissors play a large part in the editorial room.

Mr. BERGERON. But we do not pay for that news.

Mr. LEMIEUX. But the public do. I am sure my hon. friend has no intention of injuring Mr. Robertson or making any insinuations against him. Mr. Robertson we know to be a fair minded man who would not lower himself by publishing anything disparaging to any religion.

Mr. BERGERON. I did not know who was responsible and I do not know Mr. Robertson, and am not making any charge or implying anything against him. All I say is that a lot of trash is sent across and published in our papers, which our papers would not publish if they had to pay the full rates and were not aided by this government subsidy.

Mr. FOSTER. I am told that the Reuters Press Agency is the most complete in the world, and that they made a proposition to put the whole of their world news at the disposal of the Canadian Press Association and allow that association to select their own editor so as to insure the sending of news that would be of use to Canada. In that way we would get a broader and a better service than we get now. Has the Finance Minister had any such proposition made to him?

Mr. FIELDING. A gentleman connected with the Reuters discussed the subject with me, but I do not think any proposal was ever made in writing. My suggestion was that he should consult the representatives of the press here and see whether they were