

On March 12, the Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick introduced, as a government measure, the Lord's day legislation promised in the speech from the Throne. With the exception of clause 3, certain excepted sales at church doors of 'devoted' articles bought by worshippers in the province of Quebec, the Bill is substantially the draft Act submitted by the Lord's Day Alliance.

So, we have their declaration that this Bill is theirs. And we have the declaration by the Prime Minister that the moment the alliance is satisfied with the Bill we, the representatives of the people of Canada, must throw away our principles, must throw away our common sense; we must allow any absurdity to be incorporated in the Bill, we must even allow the Bill to be changed and made worse, simply because the gentlemen who are the real authors of the legislation will accept it. In other words the government and parliament of Canada are not free to take any exception to the orders given them by the authors of this legislation. Well, if there should be only one free man in this House, I will be that one. But I trust there are others like minded with myself in that matter. The more we study this Bill, the clearer it will be to the conscience of every free man of this country, that this parliament must not submit to be dictated to by any body of men, religious or civil, in a matter within the competence of this House. It may be that I have gone beyond the scope of the amendment that is now before us, but the necessity for doing so was made by the declaration of the Prime Minister, and I have felt it my duty to speak as I have done. So far as this clause is concerned, if it is impossible for the government to accept an amendment which will make it workable and sensible, which will not authorize something much worse than what is prohibited, it should accept the amendment of my hon. friend from Montmagny (Mr. Armand Lavergne) and strike out the whole clause. As far as I am concerned, I am free to admit that it would be no hardship to me if shooting was prohibited altogether. Of course, I do not care very much if it is permitted. At the same time I am free to admit that some of the shooting may be detrimental to Sunday rest, but that is the kind which is allowed by this Bill. I say that the greatest noise heard in villages is not from the target shooting, in most cases it comes from those that gather on Sundays, to shoot at turkeys and pigeons, and that is left free by this clause. The Minister of Justice says that is not permitted; perhaps it is not in so many words. It may be forbidden by clause 2, which says no work is permitted. But so far, we have no explanation as to the exact meaning of that clause, what it will permit or what it will prohibit. That is going to be left to the judgment of every justice of the peace, of

Mr. BOURASSA.

every country magistrate, who will have to say what we have not the courage to say here for ourselves. I take it for granted that clause 2 simply prohibits labour in any trade, or in the exercise of any professional calling; but I do not think that parties organized for turkey or pigeon shooting can be called a trade or a professional calling. In my opinion these shooting parties will be permitted, it is merely target shooting which is prohibited. I think you are going to allow what in most cases you want to prohibit. We are not legislating only for Kamloops or Revelstoke; there are other places in Canada for which we are legislating. We are legislating for the whole of Canada.

Mr. RALPH SMITH. But you are confining your objection to Quebec.

Mr. BOURASSA. Not at all. I say either permit or prohibit shooting. It does not matter to me which you do.

Mr. RALPH SMITH. But you are making a general opposition to the Bill.

Mr. BOURASSA. The hon. gentleman is usually a man of good judgment, but he should make his remark in the right place. I am not opposing the prohibition of all shooting, nor am I now discussing the whole Bill.

Mr. PATERSON. Then what are you talking about?

Mr. BOURASSA. The Minister of Customs perhaps is so much bothered with this legislation that he does not know the section we are discussing. I suppose I may be allowed as much freedom as the Minister of Customs or the Prime Minister. My hon. friend has received the inspired light of the body that is responsible for this legislation, and I have not. Of course, he is an older man than I am; still, I must follow the light that God has given me. Now, this is the position I take with regard to this clause: Is it your intention to prohibit shooting or not? If it is, then prohibit shooting. If it is your intention to permit shooting, then permit it. If it is your intention to prohibit that kind of shooting which creates a noise on Sunday, whether in Quebec or elsewhere—not only in Revelstoke—then prohibit that kind of shooting which occasions scandal, this turkey and pigeon shooting, which are not only carried on in Quebec but elsewhere. I do not speak only from a Quebec point of view, but from what I think is the common sense point of view. I say that if it is detrimental to Sunday rest for one man to shoot at a target, it should be just as detrimental for twenty men to shoot at fifty turkeys.

Mr. GALLIHER. The hon. gentleman, I think, misunderstands my amendment. What I propose to add to the section would not prohibit the shooting at game.