

who act independently of the federal authority? Is not the whole basis of our constitution dependent upon that principle? What has the Prime Minister of Canada to do with the selection by the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan of the man who shall be Prime Minister of that province? But that is not all. Mr. Scott continues:

Had Haultain acted with any approach to propriety under the circumstances I believe that Laurier would have absolutely refused to pass him over. His whole conduct, however, from first to last in this business has been execrable. His going into Oxford and London, combined with the threat he made at Woodstock on the night of the election to stir up a school question in one of the new provinces if he obtained control, compelled Laurier to change his mind.

What is the duty of the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan? It is understood by Mr. Scott at least that the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan has nothing at all to do with the selection of his Prime Minister, but that it is a question to be properly and rightly determined, under our constitution, by the Prime Minister of Canada. Well, that was not the doctrine of my right hon. friend years ago. Before I was a member of this House I can recollect motions made by the late Hon. David Mills propounding the theory (and it is the right and proper theory) that the lieutenant governor of a province must act independently of federal authority; that he must not be made subservient to federal authority; that his is an office of dignity and importance under the constitution and that there should be no attempt on the part of the federal authority to coerce or to influence the judgment of a lieutenant governor. The lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, as the lieutenant governor of any other province of Canada, represents the Crown in respect of provincial matters just in the same way as the Governor General represents the Crown in respect of federal matters. He is not an officer of the federal government; he is the direct representative of the Crown, and any attempt to undermine the dignity and the independence of such an officer is in my opinion a blow aimed against the spirit and indeed against the letter of the constitution.

There are one or two other matters to which I desire briefly to allude. One is the crisis which it appears has developed in the county of Quebec. I was not aware that any crisis had developed in that county until I was informed of the fact by reading in the Toronto 'Globe' a report of some remarks of my hon. friend the Minister of Justice, who I regret is not in his place to-day. There has been an election in Quebec county, and it appears that an hon. member of this House, who was not the choice of the Prime Minister or of the leaders of the Liberal party, has been returned. This event seems to have excited

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my hon. friend the Minister of Justice to an unusual extent. I had followed the debates upon the public platform a little, but I had not heard that there was any sectarian question raised in that fight, and I appeal to my right hon. friend the Prime Minister for confirmation, if he desires to give it, of the statement of the Minister of Justice. I am quoting from a report of a speech made by the Minister of Justice at Warton on the 24th of October, contained in the Toronto 'Globe' of the following day:

Only yesterday in the county of Quebec the fires of sectarian hatred have been lighted, on the ground that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was too British for his political opponents there. If he is too British for them he should be British enough for the province of Ontario.

And further on:

And just as those in Quebec who wish his downfall are to-day having the victory they say they have won on the plains of Quebec, those in Ontario who are exulting in the victory over Sir Wilfrid Laurier are, if they but knew it, digging the very grave of British institutions in Canada, and seeking to put us in the position in which we were fifty or sixty years ago, when one province was arrayed against the other and there seemed to be no hope of a solution of the difficulties of our struggling country.

Well, the member for the county of Quebec (Mr. Robitaille) is very young; he is, I believe, only 24 years of age; and he made a very good fight in that county, as is evident from the fact that he was returned; but I was not aware that he had put forward any programme which was likely to result in digging the grave of British institutions in Canada. I would appeal to my right hon. friend the Prime Minister with the hope that he will declare to us that these apprehensions of the Minister of Justice are entirely unfounded. If they are not unfounded, then it seems to me that we are on the eve of a great crisis in this country, and it is a remarkable evidence of the ability of this young gentleman, the youngest member of the House, whom we had the honour of congratulating yesterday when he was introduced, that at so early an age, he has been able to prepare the grave of British institutions in Canada. It may not be a tribute to his good judgment, but I am sure that we shall all agree that it is a remarkable tribute to his energy and ability and capacity. If we can only turn the energy and capacity of that young gentleman in the right direction, what may we not expect from him in the near future? My hon. friend the mover of the address has referred to the great work done by the Prime Minister. He did not refer to his work in opposition, but only to his work since he came into power. I do not know whether there was any significance in that; perhaps my hon. friend from Lambton (Mr. Pardee) will inform us on some future occasion.