

## LAFONTAINE'S FAREWELL SPEECH

readily conceive with what danger such a resource was fraught. It was but natural that this system should give occasion to many abuses.

"We commenced, therefore, our struggle to extirpate these abuses, to establish that form of government that it was our right to have and which we have to-day,—true representative English government. Let it be borne in mind that under our former system of government all our struggles were vain and produced only that racial hate and animosity which is happily passing from us to-day, and which, I venture to hope, this banquet may tend still further to dissipate.

"I hope that I give offence to none if, in speaking of the union of the provinces, I say that history will record the fact that the union was a project, which, in the mind of its author, aimed at the annihilation (*anéantissement*) of the French-Canadians. It was in this light that I regarded it. But after having subsequently examined with care this rod of chastisement that had been prepared against my compatriots, I besought some of the most influential among them to let me make use of this very instrument to save those whom it was designed to ruin, to place my fellow-countrymen in a better position than any they had ever occupied. I saw that this measure contained in itself the means of giving to the people the control which they ought to have over the government, of establishing a real government in Canada. It was under