

Mr. Villemain said :

"The French language is, and will be the principal idiom through which the whole universe may be united."

In a journal of the city of Montreal, bearing date July, 1881, there appeared a letter from a gentleman named McIntosh, wherein I read :

"I regret to see your great French Canadian leaders seeming to be ashamed of their mother tongue, but let Canadians not believe that the English people will consider them the more for that. On the contrary, they would feel more respect for them, if Canadians would openly affirm their nationality, if they would freely acknowledge their truthfulness to their flag, their tongue and their institutions. Let Canadians work so that the officers of their country shall learn both languages."

Even the Montreal *Daily Witness*, in its issue of the 7th instant, favors the speaking and teaching of both English and French in Ontario. Let me quote the passage :

"It was interesting to note the course of the debate on the French and German schools (in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario). It was raised by Mr. Craig, who brought the condition of these schools under the notice of the Assembly last year, and who this year asked the House to pass a Bill making the use of English compulsory in all public and separate schools, except that when the pupils do not know English, the French language may be used to a limited extent. Even this drastic proposal shows, as was then pointed out, that it is impossible to do away entirely with the use of the French language in the public schools, and that the most that can be hoped for is the acquisition of English by the French pupils after the lapse of a reasonable time. Until English becomes more than it now is, the language of the home and of the social circle in which the children move and grow up it is useless to expect them to come to school prepared to take in learning through the medium of any but the French language, and to deprive them absolutely of the use of it would be to deprive them of the means of obtaining an education altogether. The compromise embodied in the regulations of the Education Department on the subject are a fair compromise. They require that English shall be the language of both instruction and discipline, French being allowed for certain terms and certain purposes only. They further provide a training school for the special use of French teachers in the counties of Prescott and Russell. And they prescribe the use of by-lingual readers in the lower classes as the best means of bridging over for the pupils the gulf between French and English."

A Conservative newspaper, the Calgary *Herald*, referring to the dual language in the North-West, says :

"It has to lament and condemn the truckling of the majority of the Conservatives in Parliament on this momentous question."

adding that the Liberals did no better.

By the Union Act of 1841 the French language as recommended by Lord Dur-

ham, was not recognized, though its existence was guaranteed by the treaty of 1763 between England and France.

A few years after the Union, an address was voted by the Legislature of the then Province of Canada, praying Her Gracious Majesty for an amendment to the Union Act of 1841, to repeal the clause prohibiting the use of French. This was granted, and Lord Elgin, in opening the Legislature in 1849, graciously said :

"Je suis fort heureux, d'avoir a vous apprendre, que, conformément au désir de la Législature Locale, exprimé dans une adresse des deux chambres du parlement provincial, le parlement Impérial a passé un acte révoquant la clause de l'acte d'Union qui imposait des restrictions à l'usage de la langue française."

I have read in French those words which fell from the lips of the then Governor at the opening of the Provincial Legislature, because it is in that language that in this instance the representative of Her Majesty read the Speech from the Throne. Let me give you in English the words which his Excellency spoke in French :

"I am most happy to have to inform you, that, conformably to the desire of the Local Legislature, expressed in an Address of both Houses of Parliament, the Imperial Parliament has passed an Act repealing the clause of the Union Act which imposed restrictions on the use of the French language."

No doubt Lord Elgin did so, inspired as he was, by a sense of justice which his good and kind heart suggested to him, in order to heal as much as he could the wounds which the unjust course followed at the time of the Union and subsequently had caused in the hearts of all true and loyal Canadians, whether French or English. The memory of the administration of Canadian affairs by this noble Governor is still fresh in the mind of every lover of our country. With this nobleman, party spirit had very little chance—English, Scotch, Irish or French was of very little consequence if it did not mean justice and equity. Toryism or Liberalism had no preference with him, if it did not agree with public good. May all true Canadians learn from this great statesman, how to deal with all questions, with which, in a mixed community like ours, we have to deal. If so, Canada will enjoy peace, happiness and prosperity. Her children will live in harmony and good-will with one another.