

fault of holding opinions of my own and of expressing them without ambiguity. I was not asked to modify my views. I have continued ever since to write as a journalist in my own fashion, and it is the first time that I am denied the right to express my views in regard to men and things according to the dictates of my conscience.

If I have written things calculated to wound those whose political opinions I do not share, I regret it both on their account and my own. It was ideas, not men I desired to oppose. But you will observe, Mr. Speaker, that even in all the most violent things that it has been possible to cite against me, there is not a single sentence, not even one word which touches the character of any individual whatsoever, not a reproach which applies to any private act. It is manifest from the writings quoted against me that I do not approve of the opinion of the partisans of the Ministry as regards a burning question on which ideas are widely different; I did not quite undertake to write the eulogium of the party which I combated in its capacity of a collective organisation; but in vain will be sought in the passages held to be criminal, a personal attack on anyone whomsoever.

I also beg you to remark that the prose article from which the Hon. Secretary of State quotes an extract, was published in a journal of the United States, and one which has but a small circulation in Canada. The verses were published in a Sherbrooke newspaper and reproduced in other newspapers. Both compositions relate to public facts, the discussion of which cannot be forbidden me in virtue of the conditions of which I was appointed translator of the Debates.

As I understand these conditions, such as they are, established by the divers reports of the Committee on the Debates and by the discussions to which they have led in the House of Commons, I am bound to do my work regularly during the Session, and am perfectly free to write politics in the newspapers when my work is done. For my part, I have always been particularly exact in fulfilling my obligations. If the Committee, Parliament and the Ministry were to overthrow a state of things consecrated by four years of practice, and proceeding *ex-parte*, change, to our loss, the conditions which they themselves established, could they also bear witness that they had themselves fulfilled their engagements in regard to us? I cannot possibly believe that a snare has been laid to entrap us, and I am convinced that the Hon. Secretary of State, who is constantly absorbed by the care of matters of far greater importance than what concerns us, must have forgotten the special circumstances which make the translation of the Debates a service wholly outside of the ordinary conditions of the employees of the Civil Service, and even those of the House of Commons.

For my part, I protest against the accusation that I calumniated the Hon. Mr. Chapleau or any other Minister or member of the House of Commons.

My greatest fault, and one which it is sought to magnify into a crime, is that I have the courage of my convictions—a fault which I acknowledge in all sincerity.

Excepting as to the charge of calumny brought in a general way against two of my colleagues and myself, an accusation which truth obliges me to repel, I have the pleasure to state that the Hon. Secretary of State has not, like Mr. Ives, placed me under the painful necessity of contradicting him. As to the fact of my opposition to the ministerial policy, we are agreed, and if I take leave to differ in opinion from him, it is only on the subject of his estimate of my words and writings. The passages quoted in his letter are, indeed, such as I remember having written, with the exception of some printers' errors. I am aware that in certain quarters much pains have been taken to fix on them a meaning which they do not bear, but I felt that I had nothing of the kind to fear either on your part or that of the Hon. Secretary of State.

I trust, Mr. Speaker, that the Committee will be allowed to deal with this affair, and that we shall be permitted to furnish proof of the facts to which we appeal in our defence.

Please to accept the assurance of the profound respect with which I have the honor to be

Your most humble and obedient servant,

RÉMI TREMBLAY.