

Ram.
PC

3609

.M12

(1134)

Not in
Not in

162

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF MR. DENISON, M.P.

House of Commons Debates

FOURTH SESSION—SIXTH PARLIAMENT.

SPEECH OF MR. DALTON MCCARTHY, M.P.,

ON THE

FRENCH LANGUAGE IN THE NORTH-WEST.

TUESDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1890.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I think it is not unreasonable that, at this hour, I should claim the indulgence of the House. The debate has lasted over five days, or nearly so, and during that time I have been subjected to as much abuse certainly as the rules of Parliament permit, and perhaps a little more than the rules would warrant. I look at my friends who are opposite to me and I find no sympathetic glances, and I have no reason to expect them. I look to the band of Nationalists who think I am assailing their race and nationality and language, and I do not find any and I do not expect any. And even when I look amongst those on this side who were once my friends and allies, I find, perhaps, more hostile glances than I do elsewhere. I am standing here alone, or almost alone, doing what I believe to be my duty, and, notwithstanding the sneers, and the taunts, and the insinuations that have been made, I propose to do my duty to the end, if I stand alone, or almost alone, on the floor of this House in the vote which is shortly to be taken. The hon. gentleman who has last spoken (Sir Richard Cartwright) has made no disguise of his feelings or his principles. He speaks not from the principle of statesmanship but from a purely partisan or party point of view. He argues with his friends behind him and his friends before him on that ground, and he appeals to them not to fall into the trap which I am accused of having laid and which some of those friends, he thinks, have already fallen into, but to reject the Bill which I have had the honor to introduce. He makes this appeal without one word of argument upon the merits of the Bill, without a word as to whether it is right or wrong in the interests of the people of the North-West, for whom we are here to judge and to legislate upon this question, but simply with a view to the effect it may have on the votes of the people whom he thinks he leads from the Province of Ontario. He warns them as to the results. He knows well enough that they have gone away from him never to return, but he tells them that they will have lost all if they

support such a measure as this and had better return to their allegiance. I looked for better things from that hon. gentleman, but have looked in vain. His speech was a purely partisan speech, without one redeeming feature, without one thing to raise it above the level of the mere party machine. I welcome his statement even from a party point of view if from no other, because it leaves that hon. gentleman without a shred of reputation as a statesman, which he once pretended to be. But I have to address myself not only to the hon. gentleman from South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright). I have to speak of the attack which has been made upon the measure from other sources, and to endeavor to clear up, if I can, the accusations which have been made. The hon. members who have supported me are small in number, though they are as true as steel. They have been overborne in this debate by the power of numbers—not of argument; and I will endeavor to show that, amid the tissue of misrepresentation which has been poured out upon our devoted heads, hon. members will find that there has been no warrant for any part of it. I am accused of having got up this agitation, of having originated it not only on matters of race, but on matters of religion, and I am accused of doing that for selfish purposes and ends. I would like to know what end I had to serve in severing myself from the gentleman I have hitherto supported, and from those hon. gentlemen behind me, who, I have reason to believe, would not have been willing to see me advanced in the ranks of rebels. What could have led me to take this course as it has been untruly represented to the House, but through the House to the country? My whole course in regard to this matter did not originate last July in my address to my constituents. But on the floor of this chamber, in the presence of hon. members who hear me now, I stated that I had discovered—as, I am ashamed to say, I discovered for the first time—that the dual language clause was in the North-West Act. We then talked it over, and I appeal to the hon. member

48728

PROPERTY
OF
LAKEHEAD
UNIVERSITY