

The Death of Scott :

"I have my sympathies for the half breeds, and I have proved it; I have proved it before to-day. In 1874, when Ambroise Lépine was accused of murder, I travelled over 2,000 miles to defend him. I did not go round passing my hat for subscriptions to pay me for defending the accused. I did it manfully, without any hope of reward. (Cheers.) The insurrection of 1870 had a color of an excuse. Men higher than I am in politics have gone so far as to say that there was justification for the rebellion of that day. It was the assertion of the rights of nationality against the cession of territory by supreme power. I defended my client and during that defence I had proof, and the best proof, too, that the killing of the unfortunate Scott, was one of the most atrocious murders ever committed. That atrocious murder was without the connivance and without the approval of Lépine, but it was the result of the selfish vengeance of the then dictator of the North-West—Louis Riel."

Such was the language spoken by the hon. gentleman on that occasion. He was speaking something like ten years after he had gone to the North-West to defend Ambroise Lépine, and after he had acquired that knowledge which enabled him to say that the murder of Scott was one of the most atrocious murders ever committed. Yet, scarcely a few weeks after his return from Winnipeg, where he had defended Lépine, the hon. gentleman moved in the Legislature of Quebec, a resolution, in which he thus characterises the act which he now represents as one of the most atrocious murders ever committed :

"The troubles in the settlement of the Red River, now the Province of Manitoba, in 1866-70, unfortunately produced a conflict of such a nature as to develop into a rising of considerable magnitude. The leaders of that movement then constituted themselves into a government, and one act to be deplored, perpetrated under the assumed authority of that government, was the execution of one of the subjects of her Majesty. While bowing to the verdict rendered against one of the actors in the movement above mentioned, public opinion in that remote Province of Manitoba, as well as in other Provinces of the Dominion, and even in England, has been strongly impressed with the idea that the deplorable act of violence is so interwoven with the political events of that unhappy period as to render it impossible to assimilate

it to ordinary cases of murder.

With the view of satisfying such sentiment of clemency, and of realizing the ideas of conciliation, peace and tranquillity, which presided over the establishment of the Confederation, and further, with the view of removing all causes of divisions and hostile sentiments from among the various nationalities of the country, and especially with the view of giving effect to the recommendation to mercy which the jury coupled with their verdict, your Excellency is humbly prayed to be pleased to exercise, in favor of Ambroise Lépine, now under sentence, the royal prerogative of mercy, by extending to him grace and pardon."

Now, if in 1874, the hon. gentleman, just fresh from Winnipeg, where he had just defended Lépine, represented this act as one "so interwoven with the political events of that unhappy period as to render it impossible to assimilate it to ordinary cases of murder," in order to obtain the life of one man, is it fair and just now to represent the same act as an atrocious murder in order to take the life of another man? Sir this issue of the death of Scott has long been a buried issue, and it should not have been brought up again for political consideration. There was a time when it was a living issue, too living an issue, before the people of this country. When the Administration of my hon. friend the member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie) came into power, that had been for years a living, burning issue before the public. Scott had been executed in the early days of 1870.

An amnesty had been promised

by the men who now sit on the Treasury benches, but they never had the courage to carry it out; they never had the courage to stand by their word and deal to the offenders in that rebellion, what they had promised to them. They allowed years and years to pass, and, in the meantime, passions were getting more and more bitter. There are prejudices in Ontario, and there are prejudices in Quebec, and upon such a question the people of Ontario took one view and the people of Quebec took the other view. The people of Ontario demanded that the law should

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