

violence, a larger percentage of the average men and women of this country must be induced to become interested in fundamental actions than is now the case.

And he continues:

The A.B.C. Society is formed primarily for young people who do not feel satisfied with our present system (who is?) but who are not sure of their ground, and want to think the matter out. Going on a basis such as this, we have the whole population to draw from except the Conservatives and the communists, and there is always a faint hope that we may even be able to interest some of them who are thinking the thing out without prejudice. I admit that there is a faint hope that they may get some of them.

The Solicitor General (Mr. Dupré) gave his reasons yesterday for being opposed to the rescinding of this section. He is reported on page 2335 of *Hansard* as follows:

It is because we do not want to give error a fair field, it is because we feel that error should not be given a fair chance, it is because we do not belong to the same school as the former Minister of Justice, that we ask for the maintenance of section 98.

The Solicitor General should have defined what he meant by error. We should not forget that down through history many things have been done which we to-day believe should not have been done. These things happened because certain people defined error in their own particular way. We had the Roman Catholics burning and hanging Protestants because they thought they were in error in their religion; we had the Protestants doing the same thing to the Roman Catholics. Do we believe that because the Roman Catholics thought the Protestants were in error they were justified in the hangings and slayings or, on the other hand, do we think that the Protestants were justified in what they did? Before we talk about error, let us define its meaning. Going back a little in history, we find that Galileo was tortured on the rack because he said that the world moves. Everyone to-day, even the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. LaVergne) believes the world moves. Bruno was burned at the stake because he said that the earth was not the centre of the universe, but most people to-day believe the earth is not the centre. Possibly the hon. member for Toronto North-west is an exception.

As regards those who talk about agitators. Let us not forget that Christ was crucified and the charge laid against him was that he was an agitator and stirred up the people. Let us remember further that the common people heard him gladly.

There is so much to be said in favour of repealing this section, so much to be said for

[Mr. MacInnis.]

freedom at all times, that I would much rather have someone with a more eloquent tongue than mine, deal with the question. But I should like to quote briefly from another authority, one who possibly was considered radical in his time but who would not be considered radical to-day, one for whose thoughts I at least have great regard. I wish to quote from Lord Macaulay, from his essay on Milton where he refers to freedom. He says:

In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice; they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendour and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

This is just what my hon. friends opposite do to-day in connection with Russia. They never take into consideration the material with which they had to build, or the difficulties they had to overcome. Let us give them as long a time as this country has had from confederation down and possibly they will then have just as much to boast about as we have to-day. Lord Macaulay continues:

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly-acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water until he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.