

in the right. There are no difficulties before which his industry shrinks. He studies his subject and masters it, and, when he is once convinced, he is adamant.

The ordeal he had to face in making his first notable speech in the House of Commons might well have dismayed a less courageous man. It was during the memorable debate on the resolution introduced by Mr. Landry, of Montmagny, declaring the deep regret of Parliament that the sentence of death passed upon Louis Riel, the leader of the revolt in the North-West, who had been convicted of high treason, was allowed to be carried into execution. The debate had lasted more than a week, and the mover of the resolution had been followed by Sir Hector Langevin, Lt.-Col. Amyot, Mr. Royal, Mr. Gigault, Mr. Clark Wallace, Mr. Cameron, of Huron, Mr. J. J. Curran, Mr. Coursolle, Mr. Wood, of Brockville, Mr. Charles Langelier, of Montmorency, Mr. Rykert, Mr. Béchard, Mr. Laurier, Sir Adolphe Caron, Mr. Desjardins, of Hochelaga, Mr. Landry, of Kent, New-Brunswick, Mr. Guay, Mr. MacIntosh, and Mr. Edward Blake, the last of whom had spoken during the afternoon and evening of March 19th, 1886. It was past midnight, when the leader of the Opposition brought his powerful and eloquent denunciation of the Government to a close, and the new Minister of Justice moved the adjournment of the debate. On the afternoon of the following Monday, the galleries round the chamber of the House of Commons were crowded, and the most intent expectation awaited the taking up of the debate. When the new Minister of Justice arose, he had before him the task of justifying the Government in having allowed the execution of Riel. In the debate on the Speech from the Throne, not many days before, Mr. Blake had remarked that Mr. Thompson,

he had not yet received the honour of his present title, - had "entered Federal politics, as the French would say, by the great gate," and that "for him there had been no apprenticeship in Parliament." In what manner the Minister of Justice acquitted himself on that day needs not to be recounted here. His speech was strong, clear, convincing. Master of himself and of his ideas, and master too of his hearers, he pierced the fine spun net of Mr. Blake's argument with the most direct and irresistible skill, and replied to him point by point with triumph. It was not his eloquence which subdued the critical, censorious body he was addressing, for eloquent he is not. An