

before the vote was taken on the Thompson amendment. But even then, surely this could not prevent any French member from following the dictates of his conscience and voting down the amendment in order to give his support to the Blake amendment, which was the best under the circumstances, and which, probably, would have been carried, or, if not, would not have put us in a worse position, but, on the contrary, would have left us in a better position, than that which we will now be in, if the present project becomes law.

My French friends from Quebec in the other House may not see to-day what will be the consequence of the vote they have given. Let them wait some time, it may be some years, they will see what the intention of their leader was in forcing them to give him their support on this national question. They will see what he aims at. To my mind his views are evident. May future events contradict my predictions! I would be most happy, for the sake of my country, should it be so. While I thus protest against the course followed by my countrymen in the other House, I am in justice bound to add that the course followed by them, it seems, is appreciated in quite another way in some parts of our Province, if I am to judge by what is going on in some quarters of our Province of Quebec.

At this very moment, while we the French members of the Senate are denouncing the act of the Government and expressing our grief at the deplorable conduct of our compatriots in the Commons who have helped the Government by supporting their views as to the advisability of granting constitutional power to the people of the North-West to deprive the French population of those territories of the privilege they now enjoy, namely, that of speaking French—while, I say, we are here expressing our sorrow at such a course having been followed, we are told by the latest papers from Montreal that in my own little town a great banquet was held in honor of the very party whom I am presently criticizing for the unpatriotic act to which I have just referred.

Should our ancestors rise from their graves, and look and hear what is going on in our times, they certainly could not believe what their eyes saw and their ears heard. What a change has taken place in some of our people during the last half

century! What has become of those grand national sentiments which led our forefathers to prefer death to humiliation? Where are those patriotic acts which have won for them a reputation for all time to come? To those great virtues of old times, have succeeded party spirit, which will blind men to such an extent that they will not see the abyss to which they are hastening. Selfishness has replaced true patriotism. Have our people forgotten the great battles which the Lafontaines, the Papineaus, the Morins, the Bedards, the Vigers and other patriots fought for the preservation of these rights and privileges which were guaranteed to them by solemn treaties between England and France?

Let them especially remember the struggles of those patriotic leaders to secure the important privilege of using their language—and then let them put their hands on their hearts and say, to-day, when their leaders are doing their utmost to deprive their compatriots of the North-West of their privileges, whether this was the proper time to banquet supporters of those who are doing the mischievous work.

A few days ago I had occasion to read in a Montreal French newspaper, a letter from Paris, dated on the 26th March last, and written by a French gentleman. In this letter I found the following advice, or I should say an expression of strong hopes as to the perseverance of our countrymen in Canada, in their attachment to their nationality. Let me read a few lines:

“No doubt the attacks recently made against the French language in Canada, will have the effect of strengthening in the hearts of all French-Canadians the worship they kept for our language and our traditions.”

Far from having had such an effect our representatives have sacrificed the rights of our compatriots in the North-West, and some of our folks in the Province of Quebec are banqueting the supporters of those men who did the bad work.

What a difference in the sentiment of our countrymen to-day, compared with that of our ancestors?

What a difference between the patriotism of the leaders in old times and the patriotism of the leaders of the Province of Quebec in our days?

I have said enough as to the unpatriotic course followed by our public men in our days, but I cannot let this occasion pass