

In dealing with this question we are certainly in a much better position than we were last year. A flood of light has poured in upon us, and yet it is impossible to deny that in many points we are still in the dark.

This little community, which has grown up in the very heart of the continent, is unique. There is nothing like it in the world. Separated by boundless prairies from intercourse with the people of the south, barred out from Canada by 800 miles of swamp and wilderness, and mountain and lake, separated from the people on the Pacific shores, by the almost impassable chain of the Rocky Mountains, they have had little intercourse with the outer world. And yet they have among them men, who have had the advantages of the best education which Europe can afford—men who, in intellectual culture, in manners, and in every social qualification, are not surpassed in any country. And yet the bulk of the people with whom these men are brought into immediate contact are the most primitive people in the world, are in the primary stages of society, in the lowest and rudest conditions of civilization.

Is it any wonder that a community so secluded from all the rest of the world, uninformed of all that is transpiring around them, should be subject to great, to unreasonable, alarms when suddenly the barrier is burst which separates them from the rest of the world, and they see their country about to be entered by strangers? Is it any wonder that their fears should be excited, and their feelings traded upon by demagogues, ambitious of power and place? I do not think it is. I deplore as much as any man in this House, I can blame with as much severity as any man in this House, the fatal results which have followed; but I cannot say I am astonished that, under the circumstances in which these men were placed and with the fears they entertained, just such things should occur as have occurred, and that they should have culminated in the sad event which we all alike deplore and condemn. The circumstances in which these events place us, impose on us a stern duty. We must re-establish law and order. We must vindicate the supremacy of the national flag. But the readiest mode of doing so, and the right mode of doing so, is, at the same time, to show these people that their fears are unfounded, to satisfy them that their rights shall be guaranteed, their property held sacred, and that they shall be secured in all the privileges and advantages which belong to them as Britons and as free men.

This is why I rejoice that the Government have proposed a most liberal Bill, which gives the people every guarantee they have a right to ask. With this Bill in one hand, and the flag of our country in the other, we can enter, not as conquerors, but as pacificators, and we shall satisfy the people there that we have no selfish object of our own to accomplish, that we go there for their good as well as for our own good.

Sir, I see provisions in this Bill which are creditable to the Government. It has, hitherto, been the pride of Canada that, in her dealings with the Indian tribes, she has evinced a spirit of generosity.—that in making treaties she has dealt liberally, and what she has promised solemnly she has kept faithfully. And at this moment she is reaping the reward of her good faith. If there is any one thing more than another that will assist us in putting an end to these Western troubles, it is the fact that the Indian tribes, in