

only three hundred of our fathers withstood for four hours and finally routed a force of seven thousand invaders under General Hampton.

Dark days, however, were in store for these brave defenders of our soil. Bad government and its attendant evils oppressed them till in 1837, exasperated beyond measure, they rose under the leadership of Louis Papineau to force a redress of their grievances. The rebellion was unsuccessful in its immediate results but obtained the real object in view, the establishment of responsible government for the colony.

I wish to refer in a special manner to the Act of Union of 1840 to emphasize the fact that there has always been a fixed determination on our part to retain the language of our ancestors, to remain a distinct element in Canada while contributing all in our power to the general welfare of the nation. The illustrious Lord Dufferin recognized the advantage which Canada derives from this element when he said: "The French race is necessary to America, and the civilization of the new world would be incomplete without that element."

The Act of Union was a piece of unjust legislation and militated against us by giving to the fifteen thousand English of Upper Canada the same number of representatives in parliament that it accorded to the one hundred and fifty-three thousand French Canadians of Lower Canada. In the contest that followed we owe the triumphant defence of our rights to Lafontaine, Caron, Morin, Chauveau, and our great George-Etienne Cartier.

Finally, the Act of Confederation gave to the French Canadians of Quebec the right to govern themselves. They have kept up to the tide of progress, notwithstanding the assertions of their enemies to the contrary; and in some respects they are leading the country. I say *leading*, when I refer to literature, the standard by which, in the future, the relative

progress of each of the Provinces will be judged. In 1891, when the Rev. Principal Grant made an attack on the whole French Canadian race, before a vast assembly of American teachers gathered in Toronto, because of certain mismanagement in one of the Departments of the Federal Government, presided over by a French Canadian, the Rev. E. I. Rexford, Supt. of the Protestant Board of Education for the Province of Quebec answered him in these words: "I stand here as the representative of the Frenchmen in a province almost wholly French, which has manifested a marvellous power of the people to stick together, surrounded as they are wholly by English influence, cut off from their native land, ruled and governed by the English people. They have preserved their language and their institutions, and Principal Grant would be the first to admit that under the greatest difficulties and disadvantages they have built up in that province a literature which stands easily first in the Dominion to-day. The literature of the Province of Quebec is far ahead of the literature of other parts of the Dominion. Not only so, Mr. Chairman," he continued, "but they have developed in the Province of Quebec, under peculiar circumstances, institutions that command our admiration."

I may also notice that the Rev. Principal of Queen's made a satirical remark as to the politeness of our race. When we consider that a man at the head of a great institution of learning depreciates this trait which is a sign of the highest civilization, we can easily divine the motives that inspired his words and judge of his influence on our young country. In the same class I shall mention a certain Rev. Mr. Sutherland of Toronto who referred to the people of Quebec as "one million five hundred thousand barbarians." Of course, when taken to task, he denied having used that phrase, but it was nevertheless a remarkable coincidence that several of