

To make the progress that has been realized in that direction has not been an easy task for our forefathers and for ourselves.

Many difficulties have had to be overcome: difficulties within ourselves as human beings resulting from inherited prejudices and temperament, and difficulties in our surroundings arising out of the geography and topography of our country.

They were very real difficulties. I am not going to expand upon them here but just to remind ourselves of how serious they were, it is well to remember that the two main strains of our population are descended from two proud races which have been century-old rivals and enemies in Europe and whose enmity and rivalry had not been confined to Europe but had crossed the ocean and besmirched the first 15 decades of white man's sway in America.

We of French descent were the issue of those who had been vanquished on the fields of battle and who had then been ceded, lock, stock and barrel, to the Government of our traditional enemies.

Those enemies did not speak our language, they knew nothing of our customs and our laws, they considered that our religion was an abominable superstition, prescribed in their home-land as dangerous to the security of the State and capable of impact only on most primitive and untutored minds.

On the other side of the picture we were just as bitter about you and only a little over 100 years ago, when Lord Durham came over here to investigate and report upon the grievances which had resulted in the uprisings of 1837, he found not only violent dissatisfaction with the existing form of government, but two races warring in the bosom of a single state.

Now, not only was it necessary for the people of your race and mine to get rid of those prejudices and to accept each other on a footing of absolute equality, but that mutual acceptance had to be so complete, so natural and so frank as to leave no doubt on either side as to each other's absolute security.

Lord Durham felt that the French-speaking group was so small that it was doomed to lose its identity, its language, its tradition and its special way of life. But there were many who felt that that could not happen and it did not happen.

Both groups had the same aspirations for a form of government which left them the responsibilities of administering their own affairs and when just 100 years ago this month, they secured responsible government and Lord Blenheim, on instruction from the home-office, undertook to administer the affairs of the country according to the advice of Ministers responsible for every item of such advice. To the elected representatives of the people, we have since that time plainly set out to arrange our affairs in the manner best adapted to meet our needs and satisfy our aspirations as a free people, and we ourselves, knew them to be.

/Of course,