

their inspiration in the old-time policy of Macdonald and Cartier, that the country has returned to the normal state from which it had been diverted by the war and the readjustment following it.

Men's actions are governed by circumstances, as also are the actions of groups of men, political parties do not escape their influence. They upset, as they please, states of minds, institutions and established customs. Can a more striking instance be found than present happening, in the house? What was but yesterday, the power and influence of those who sit on your right, sir, and who hail from the province of Quebec! What part did they play in the destinies of their party and what influence had they in the councils of the nation!

And look what has happened within a few hours. Quebec now holds in its hands the balance of power. Whether it casts its weight on one side or the other or whether it holds aloof, the fate of the nation depends on its attitude. It is my province which gives to the hon. Prime Minister the power and the means of governing. Had she turned a deaf ear to his voice, things would have remained as they were.

It is, to my viewpoint, altogether in keeping with the spirit of confederation that the old province of Quebec should fulfil this regulating function. The unit of representation for all the provinces of the Dominion is based on Quebec's population as well, its quota of representatives as laid down in the Confederation Act. In the Senate it forms an impressive background with its representation as defined by the confederation pact. That is why the views of Quebec became through force of circumstances, the views of the Canadian people. Should Quebec grant its support to one of the parties, that party can maintain itself in power. Should it withdraw its support the reverse happens. This is precisely what we have just witnessed to the astonishment and joy of the whole country.

The part assigned to Quebec as the bulwark of tradition, as the regulator of conflicting forces in the political arena, Quebec is proud to vindicate. It is the moral factor, the almost immeasurable force which makes up for the deficiency of numbers. In a country like ours, where two highly civilized races must live side by side, unavoidably there arises conflicts, because all that pertains to man, all that is human, is liable to err, is liable to improve, subject to criticism. Physical or numerical superiority, if you choose, may inexpediently go counter to moral influences having on their side nothing but absolute

justice, relative equity or the authority of the law. It behooves the statesman to poise and counterpoise in such a way these two forces, one idealistic if you wish, the other decidedly matter of fact, with a view to harmonizing them and rounding off their differences. The Fathers of Confederation, who were statesmen in the full meaning of the word foresaw and realized such a thing. They laid the foundations of their constitutional edifice on sound bases and far-seeing justice. They coated this structure with the only material substance which could endure the inclemency of time; I mean mutual respect.

Our people, sir, have inborn in them the love of respect. Notwithstanding the easygoing familiarity which we borrow from the Americans and which is congenial neither to our tastes nor to our turn of mind we have remained considerate of others. Respectful of established order, of institutions which govern us, of religious traditions both local and national. Respectful especially of natural or acquired rights of other races with whom we live. This broad measure of justice which is but the outward mark of acknowledged strength, we never have bargained over it. We have in return, but asked for reciprocal treatment. Our people are more and more imbued with a legitimate pride. They see their Quebec and Canadian ideals awakening under a warmer sun, the motive of their attitude and strength of their arms.

Upon this basis of mutual respect in the full acknowledgment of reciprocal rights and duties which she demands, the province of Quebec will continue to offer to the sister provinces the meed of her stability, her thorough Canadianism and strict orderliness imparted by her unshakable faith and inherited from her forebears.

These last days, weighing these few thoughts and the present political situation, I had the curiosity to look over old documents and to read again, among others, the debates of the session of 1879.

The Conservative party under the leadership of Sir John A. Macdonald had, in October, 1878, just won a marked victory over the party led by the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie who, during his four years in power, had reverted to free trade.

Mr. Joseph Tassé, member for Ottawa, who had been chosen to second the Address in reply to the speech from the throne, on the 13th of February, 1879, at the opening of the fourth parliament, summing up the balance-sheet for the four years of Liberal administration, said: "Our trade is paralyzed, our industries are tottering, our working classes