

# DEBATE ON LOUIS REIL.

SPEECH BY MR. J. J. CURRAN, M.P.;

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA, ON MONDAY, THE 15TH OF MARCH, 1886.

(*Hansard Report*).

The following is a full report of the speech delivered in the House of Commons, Ottawa, on Monday, the 15th March, 1886, by Mr. J. J. CURRAN, M.P. for Montreal Centre:—

Mr. CURRAN—Mr. Speaker, I deem it proper, in rising to address the House to-day on this most important question, to say one or two words with respect to the position I occupy in connection with this debate. It has been my duty upon former occasions to address this House upon questions involving very great feeling, and I may say here, in presence of all my friends, that whatever I have said on former occasions upon any question affecting the interests of the country, or affecting the interests of any class in the country, I adhere to to-day. It is my painful duty on this occasion to differ with a certain number with whom I have been in the habit of working in the past, and I regret to see them separating themselves from me and the friends that surround me; but whilst I do regret that, whilst I regret to be obliged to raise my voice in opposition to their views, I feel I should be unworthy of the position I occupy if I did not come out boldly and manfully and state what I believe to be for the true interests of the country in this great agitation that has been brought about by men who, I think, have acted with precipitation and without duly considering the results of their action. Not only in one section of this country, where I have had an opportunity of denying the statements made, but even in my own division, slanders have been circulated with regard to myself. All I have to say, and I take this opportunity of saying it, in the presence of this House and the country is that my ambition has been to represent my fellow citizens of Montreal

Centre, that they have sent me here by an overwhelming majority, and having placed their confidence in me I shall not desert them so long as they stand by me in this Parliament, and I trust with their confidence and still greater assent, if possible, more emphatically given, to have the honor of representing them in the next Parliament. (Cheers.) It becomes my duty to follow one of the speakers on the other side of the House who made a most violent address on last Friday night. Some portions of that speech I will refer to very briefly indeed. The gist of nearly all the gentleman said he chose to say on an exceedingly low level, and if I am obliged to follow him upon that ground he cannot complain; if I am obliged to fight him on the ground he has chosen himself he cannot complain; and he cannot complain if I am obliged to show that while in the political parties in this country, as in the political parties of every country, there is on both sides bigotry to be found, yet in the Conservative party the brains are ahead of the bigotry, whilst in the Reform party the bigotry is ahead of the brains. (Loud cheers.) The hon. gentleman spoke in the first instance with respect to the legality of the trial. He agrees with the hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Gigault) that the trial was a legal trial, that it had all the elements of legality about it, but he said that the trial was not a fair one.

## WAS THE TRIAL FAIR?

I say on this occasion that I am surprised to find a gentleman calling himself a lawyer who pretends to say that a trial can be legal without being fair. What is the test of fairness? The only test of fairness is that which is established by law; you cannot go beyond that; the judge can-