

Consequently, in a country like this, where one-third of the population are French, and more than one-half can speak the language fluently, is it not in the best interests of the people that it should be one of the official languages? If we have such an advantage over all other countries, why should we give it up and stand in an inferior position?

Ever since this colony has become British, such views as those I have alluded to already against the use of French have been entertained by a certain class of our fellow-subjects of British origin, while another class, such as Mr. Thompson, whom I have just now referred to, have entertained larger views, and have thought that because the English speaking population are in a great majority, they ought not to use their power to trample upon the minority, and deprive them of the privileges which they had won upon the battlefield by their vigorous defence of their homes, and which were solemnly guaranteed to them by treaty at the time of the cession of Canada to England. There is no doubt the general commanding the British army on that occasion, as well as England herself, conceded those great privileges to the people they had forced to change their allegiance, in consideration of the heroic efforts and brave defence our forefathers had made before they capitulated. The English generals knew that unless the conditions of the surrender were most honorable the French commanders would fight to the last man. The English commander was also too good a soldier to force his gallant adversaries to such an extreme, which, after all, could bring about a change of the rolls. He acceded to all honorable conditions which could not injure but, on the contrary, which could give honor to his country, and England ratified those conditions, as they are mentioned in the Treaty of Paris of 1763. An English historian writes (H. H. Miles, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L.):

“By the Treaty of Paris France surrendered, finally, all her possessions on the American continent. \* \* The Treaty confirmed, in substance, those articles of the capitulations of Quebec and Montreal which related to the religion, language, laws, customs and property of the inhabitants.” \* \* \*

When all those facts are present to my mind, I repeat it is a matter of surprise to me to witness the efforts which are constantly made to deprive one-third of the po-

ulation of this country—a country which is theirs more than it is that of any other nationality, if the first settlement of it means anything—to deprive, I say, the first settlers of this country of those privileges which are guaranteed to them by the most solemn promises and acts of the supreme authority which rules here as well as in England. Are they loyal, those who so stir up feelings of animosity between the two great nationalities existing in this country? Loyal, to my mind, means faithful, true, faithful to the Queen, true to the Queen. Are they true, are they faithful to the Queen who, disregarding her solemn promises, her solemn engagements, agitate the public mind and stir up feelings of animosity between her most faithful subjects? I say no. There is no loyalty in such a course. Loyalty does not consist in words, but in facts, in acts. Facts are stubborn arguments which no word can invert. You wish to be loyal? Then show by your acts that you are so. Submit to the state of things which the Crown has established and which the Queen herself and her Parliament cannot change without bringing disgrace upon England. A treaty is binding upon the two parties who signed it. The French Canadians have always done their fair share, even when an unjust oligarchy ill-treated them. Their people at large kept faith with the Crown of England. They fought the battles of Britain on this side of the Atlantic. They rejected all overtures from the United States, and so showed their loyalty to the Empire. To this very day they have submitted patiently to ill-treatment, using only legitimate means for redress, such as appeals to the Queen, the right of petition which every British subject has. Where, then, would be the excuse for the Imperial authorities to violate their engagements and deprive us of those privileges and rights which were accorded to us in the battle field amid the firing of musketry and the thunder of grape-shot?

No; England could not honorably do such a thing and she did not do it. Then, how can this Parliament do so without bringing dishonor on the mother country? Would not this be disloyalty? I hear an objection which I have before heard now and then. It is this: Are there not now, and have there not for years past, been parts of Canada where the French language