

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

The Ontario Bilingual School Question attained its full amplitude when the Province of Quebec, faithful to its mission of protecting French-speaking minorities throughout Canada, raised its voice in favour of the persecuted French-speaking inhabitants of Ontario. Our foremost churchmen and statesmen, by their firm and eloquent declarations, have enlightened public opinion, and the despicable Regulation XVII has been branded by all men for whom justice is not a vain word.

We may say without being indiscreet, that l'Association d'Education des Canadiens-Français d'Ontario was not immediately successful in obtaining or rousing this protestation of Right against Might. The Association had to peer into the past, perform, as it were, the work of the historian, in order to establish that, before Confederation and after it, there existed on soil that belongs to the Province of Ontario to-day, schools where French was taught to the knowledge, and with the approval and the aid, of the governing powers. It had to compile texts, become a civilian to prove, since such was the fact, that the French language in the Province of Ontario has, according to the constitution, the same rights as the English language in the schools of the Province of Quebec. This research work and interpretation once terminated, the sturdy heads of the Association considered no duty so sacred as that of disseminating, both by word of mouth and the press, the truth thus acquired.

Thanks to this action, which was necessary, they succeeded in enlightening and arousing the thoughtful and directing elite of the Province of Quebec, and, this element once gained to their cause, all the French-speaking Canadian groups have raised their swords in defence of the bilingual cause. This is a noble movement, which seems to portend victory.

Subsidiary to the general strife, there is another struggle, a less noisome one whose stake is the University of Ottawa. This institution, founded in 1848 by His Lordship Mgr. Joseph-Eugène Guigues, of the Congregation of Mary Immaculate, performed in relative peace its task of education in both English and French, till 1874. At this date, the dualism respecting language, which characterized it, was greatly modified. And although, since 1900, a vigorous effort has restored the primitive twinship, yet Esau and Jacob, two races and two nations, continue to struggle in the womb of the unhappy Rebecca.

Evidently no person expects me to designate in *La Nouvelle-France* and judge those responsible for these changes. It belongs to history to impose the sanctions of justice and truth upon the authors of these modifications. My task, which is a much more modest one, consists in projecting a new light upon the rights of the French language in the University of Ottawa, not particularly, however, because these rights are in any manner obscure or precarious. A first answer was given in a secret memoir written by His Grace Archbishop