

SPEECH

OF

C. FAIRBAIRN, M.P.

ON THE

REMEDIAL BILL, MANITOBA

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, 31st MARCH, 1896.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN. I did not intend to say a word in this debate, were it not for the remarks made by the hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace), a man for whom I had the highest esteem all my life, a man whom I went a long way to oblige, and a man to whom I have given a good many votes, to keep him in the position he now occupies of Grand Sovereign of the Orange Order. When that hon. gentleman (Mr. Wallace) said here to-night, that I was coerced to vote as I did on the second reading of the Bill, I have a right to rise in this House and to rebuke that remark of the hon. gentleman. I want to tell the hon. member for West York that I think I represent as many Orangemen in this House as any man, taking the population according to the square mile, outside of the cities. I say that the Orangemen of Canada are a body of men that I am proud of; a body of men that are a credit to this country. I want to tell that hon. gentleman here to-night, in good faith and in good feeling, that there was not one man in South Victoria who asked me how I was going to vote on this question. I want also to tell the hon. gentleman (Mr. Wallace), that there was not one member of this Government, or not one member of this Parliament, who asked me how I was going to vote. I want to tell the hon. gentleman (Mr. Wallace) that my Protestant ideas and principles are just as strong as his, but I am a lover of fair-play, and

the minority in Manitoba have a grievance, and I, as an Orangeman, am willing to relieve them from that grievance. I tell the hon. gentleman that I speak for conscience sake in this matter. I have a feeling for the men who went to that country as pioneers, and who had the heavens for a blanket and only the sod of the prairie for a pillow; and when the descendants of those people come and ask for fair-play from the people of this country, I think it would be a pity if I could not give it to them. The hon. gentleman knows as well as I do that the Protestants of that country asked that they might enjoy the same privileges as the Protestant minority of Quebec enjoyed, and their request was granted, by the Canadian Government. But when the descendants of the old pioneer missionaries of that country are reduced to a small minority, and a Grit government gets into power and takes away the rights and privileges which they had enjoyed under the government of this country, I say—and I will not take back on any platform in Canada anything I say here to-night—that these men have my sympathy, and therefore I voted that this Government should give that minority their rights. The minority in Manitoba might have been Protestant, just as they are Catholic, and I wonder how the hon. gentleman would like it if a Protestant minority were subject to Catholic schools. For my part I would not wish it. I believe in fair-play; and when the hon. gentleman