

bitterly, is the fact that we are to be deprived of one of our privileges. As I have said, we were the first settlers in this country; we opened up the North-West, and we have been improving the land for those who have come after us. It seems but reasonable, therefore, that the right to maintain our language should be respected by the population of this Dominion. We have done nothing that would justify the majority in depriving us of that privilege. On all occasions we have shown our loyalty and devotion to British institutions, and we are not ashamed to appear before the people of the Dominion and ask them if we have ever failed to respond to the call of duty or to show a spirit of patriotism whenever the occasion required it. The refusal to concede to us the use of our language is certainly something that we had no reason to expect. If only as an act of courtesy, the right should not be questioned. We are in the minority to-day—why? Because many of our friends are now living in other parts of the world, and especially in the United States, spreading their civilization, the French language and their customs, and wherever they go they are respected. I hope that the feeling aroused by the discussion of this question will not justify anyone in bringing against us a charge of disloyalty, but if we are ungenerously treated in Canada, there are other parts of the world where we will receive assistance and where we would be maintained in our rights. I do not want to be understood as uttering a defiance in this House; in the twenty years that I have occupied a seat in the Senate, I have always endeavored to show the respect and the loyalty which those whom I represent cherish for British institutions. I think, therefore, that I shall have the sympathy of this House in the appeal that I make to-day. We have seen stormy times in the past, and the storm has been succeeded by calm. I hope in this case that the storm will pass over, and that feelings of friendship and even of mutual affection will be restored between the different races that inhabit the Dominion. It is everywhere conceded that the French language is the most magnificent language spoken in the world. In the various courts of the nations of Europe it is used in preference to any other language, and is in most instances the language of courts, of royal households, and

of the families of noblemen and people holding high positions in society. It is a language used by the royal family of England and the noblemen of that country. That is a consideration which should weigh with us when we are asked to abolish the use of the French language in our Statute-books. In the interest of the British Empire we should encourage the use of the French language. We are proud of an Empire which includes so many races, in which so many languages are spoken and so many forms of religion exist. It is what makes England great above all nations, and the admiration of the world. It is desirable that harmony should exist in this country and one way to promote it, and thereby to promote the prosperity of the Dominion, is to avoid such irritating questions as the one which has been brought before this House. It would be well if we could put a stop to this discussion now. Although there are a great many people in the North-West, who speak the French language, the number of French representatives in the Legislature is very limited. Last Session the legislation of the Assembly was not printed in French, and the Governor, although a French Canadian, delivered the speech from the Throne in the English language only. His natural feeling, no doubt, was to give a French version of it to the people. Another reason why we should, in this matter, be treated with more consideration is that we, of French origin, use the English language very largely. We have to come in contact with the English speaking population, and we use their language to a very large extent in the public business of the country. No doubt, in the rural sections, the farmers and their families have not generally acquired a knowledge of English yet, but the language is taught in the village schools, and before long it will be universally known throughout the Dominion. In fact, already in the Eastern Townships you will find whole families of French origin speaking English. I hope that in the family circle their mother tongue will be preserved, but there is no doubt that in the transaction of business before many years the language of the country will be English.

At the same time, if we are influenced by the political feelings of the day; if the French Canadians are forced to use the English language in their families, natur-