

before speaking myself, to see whether, among all the able men who have taken part in it, among particularly the many able men who have spoken in opposition to this measure, any one of them would advance a reason that would justify me in saying that it was not my duty to continue to give the Bill my support.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. DOHERTY: If, with all the great intellectual power that these gentlemen possess; if, with all the research that they have given to the examination of the question, if with all the zeal that inspired them to find that sufficient reason, they have not succeeded in finding it,—and I would have welcomed that reason—it looks to me clear, as it did when this measure was proposed, and as when I gave my assent to the suggestion that it should be proposed, that it was the duty of this Government to propose it, and that it still is the duty of this Government and of the members of this House to support it. I respect the views of every man, and I have no quarrel with those whose consciences inspire in them the belief that their duty lies in another direction. For me the path of duty is absolutely clear with regard to this question, and it is because that path of duty is so clear that I find myself today impelled to intervene in this debate at this last moment.

I have said that duty is the subject of my story. If I intervene in this debate, it is because I fain would emphasize, so far as it may be possible for me to do, the necessity—I would rather say the obligation—that in my judgment lies upon one and all of us to concentrate our minds in our dealing with this question upon that one thing: our duty to Canada. So concentrating our minds, let me say, Mr. Speaker, I think that it would be well for all of us to try, for the time being at all events, to put aside many considerations which might naturally influence each and every one of us in arriving at a conclusion as to what our own individual course of action upon the question should be. Let me not be misunderstood. I am not undertaking to criticise what other hon. members may have considered it their duty to say, as supporting one view or the other upon this measure, but I permit myself to say that it has been a matter of very great regret to me, as I have sat here listening to this debate, to see how far and to what extent it had drifted into inter-provincial and inter-racial—shall I say re-

criminations? I do not want to use any harsh language, but I think perhaps that word is not stronger than may be properly applied. It strikes me that there is no question, considered by itself, that it should have been so possible to debate, without any reference whatsoever to the race of any man, or to the province from which he came.

The hon. gentleman (Mr. Lafortune) who has just resumed his seat has found fault with one gentleman and another, whose names he has mentioned, on this side of the House, because, as he said, they sat silent and said no word in defence of the province of Quebec. May I be permitted to say, Mr. Speaker, that in this wide Dominion there is no province, in my judgment, of which a man may be more proud to be a citizen than my native province of Quebec. I have no apologies to make for her. She holds her place in this Confederation, and it is good for this Confederation that she does. We live in that province, men of different races and creeds, and may I be permitted to suggest that we be left to ourselves to deal with the faults and the virtues of the province of Quebec? That is equally true if you reverse the situation. May I not say to my friends from the province of Quebec that in the discussion of this question, perhaps it was not necessary that we should refer to the faults and the virtues of our fellow Canadians from the province of Ontario. Can we not for the moment forget those things? Can we not too forget the differences of race that exist? Things have been said from one point of view and from the other that, frankly, I do not think it could have been pleasant for any Canadian to hear. It does seem to me that it was most unfortunate that it should have been thought necessary to say these things in the discussion of a question whose decision is of such vast import to this our common country, and in regard to which it is of such prime importance that whatever that decision be, it may, when it is once reached, be presented for acceptance to a united people.

We are of different races in this country, but we are all Canadians. I have suggested that we forget for the moment that we are of different races. I do not want to suggest that it is desirable that we should drive from our memories the history of our progenitors. I firmly believe that there is no greater or more overpowering influence that directs the actions of men than the race feeling, and no call which men respond to more readily than that of the blood. It works for great and good results. I am not