

the farmer, the artisan and the fisherman from the grasp of certain industries.

The Speech from the Throne also deals with the Manitoba schools question. The settlement of this vexed question, which has given rise to such stormy debates, was no further advanced at the dissolution of Parliament, three months ago, than it was six years since. For motives which I do not see fit to scrutinize or qualify, the Conservative party has done nothing but procrastinate, postpone and dilly-dally with this question every time it was brought before the House during the last Parliament. It was only at the last hour, after a ministerial crisis, unprecedented in parliamentary annals, when all delays had expired, that a Bill full of imperfections and more remarkable for what it left out than for what it contained, was proposed. The School Bill had been dignified with an imposing title, but in reality it contained two radical vices which rendered it unacceptable to one side as to the other. This Bill guaranteed nothing substantial to the Catholic minority of Manitoba, and at the same time antagonized by its violent provisions those whose help and good-will were so necessary for the allaying of a dangerous agitation. The position then taken by the distinguished chief of the Liberal party was the most rational and the most equitable. Let us not forget that we live in a country composed of diverse elements, enjoying equal rights. The races which inhabit it have the same interests and are entitled to the same share of liberty, to the same right to bask in the sunshine of liberty. But if conflicts arise between them, conciliation and tolerance should be resorted to, above everything else, to dissipate prejudice, hatred and passion. It was this wise and prudent policy which was endorsed at the polls by the electorate. Despite the manifestly unfair fight carried on and the unjust attacks made upon it, the Liberal party, we feel confident, will settle this Manitoba school question, a few months hence, without disturbance or shock, so as to satisfy all parties interested. The alliance, formed at the opening of the electoral campaign, and which offers a striking analogy to that between Lafontaine and Baldwin, is already an assured pledge of success. The noble veteran of the Liberal party in the province of Ontario, Sir Oliver Mowat, has been for the last quarter of a century, the champion of liberty in educational matters, and his name alone is a talisman. As to the eminent gentleman whom we are so happy to see in the position of Prime Minister, his past career is a sufficient guarantee of the tact which he will display in the settlement of so irritating a question on the lines of justice and equity. In this work of pacification, the Government ask the active co-operation of all those who believe in the future of Canada. My task, Mr. Speaker, is now accomplished, but before resuming my seat, I believe I will but be

echoing the opinion of the large majority of the electors of this country in expressing my sincere satisfaction at the signal triumph achieved by the Liberal party at the last elections. After twenty years of ostracism, of bitter combats, of repeated defeats, the Liberal party resumes the helm of affairs with a revival of youth, of vigour and of energy. With leaders of integrity, a scrupulous economy in the administration of public affairs, a firm and vigorous adherence to the path of reform and progress, with respect for the constitution, with fidelity to its promises and attachment to its traditions, the people expect much from the Liberal party. Like the signal placed on the mast which protects the ships from the rocks and shoals, the Liberal party is also bound to guide and protect with jealous care the country whose destinies have been entrusted to it. At the beginning of this century, in the first Canadian Parliament, when an intriguing and ambitious party diverted the public funds from their proper destination and smothered the popular liberties, the Liberal party was ever to the fore and energetically insisted upon respect for rights and franchises trampled under foot. Out of this memorable fight were born our public liberties and responsible government. By a curious return of human events, at the dawn of the new era, which will be called the 20th century, the Canadian people, instructed by past events and moved by a sentiment of gratitude, confide anew their destinies to their defenders of old. But, Sir, despite the verdict so freely and so spontaneously given by the electorate on June 23rd last, a discordant note continues to be raised. A group of public men and journalists whom I would not confound with what was once the great Conservative party, exert themselves to raise the cry of French domination, because, for the first time since confederation, the Prime Minister is of French origin. It is true, and I am glad to avow it, the old French province of Quebec, the mother of the confederated provinces, hailed with pride and joy when the hon. Premier was called by His Excellency the Governor General to take the reins of Government. But to whom do we owe this honour, if not to the English Liberal party, who, in 1889, without considering the race and the religion of Mr. Blake's young lieutenant, have given him the command, relying upon his proverbial integrity, on his political genius and on his grand eloquence? The province of Quebec is, no doubt, legitimately delighted at the result of the elections, but, Sir, more than any other, you can testify that she has no desire to dominate. Her dream, as I said, is not to dominate but to meet in friendly rivalry with the English provinces upon a ground where the scot is sure, where the hand is free and where the heart will feel neither weakness nor shame; and that ground is Canada, our common country. And let me repeat