

given, not to the courts, but to the Federal Government and Parliament. It is not, therefore, a judicial but a political appeal, and as such is to be exercised not only for the benefit of the minority but for the good and welfare of the Canadian people as a whole. This is the true interpretation of the constitution, and the hon. gentleman is surprised at the attitude which I have taken upon this question. Let me tell him, as he well knows that there is no party to this controversy, not even the government of Manitoba, which ever denied that the power of appeal existed in this Parliament, which ever denied that we had the power to interfere and lay violent hands upon the legislation of Manitoba. But, Sir, though we have that power, all reasonable men, all those who love their country, insist that it shall not be exercised violently, but that it shall be used only as a last resort when every other means had failed to obtain that degree of justice due to the complaining minority. The hon. gentleman knows right well that this is the view maintained by the Manitoba government themselves. Let me quote to him the very language of the Attorney General of Manitoba in answer to the communication of the Dominion Government:

The remedy sought to be applied is fraught with great danger to the principle of provincial autonomy. An independent consideration of the subject, as well as the recognized constitutional practice in analagous cases, clearly indicates that it should only be made use of as a last resort; and after the clearest possible case has been made out, it is obvious that so drastic proceeding as the coercion of a province in order to impose upon it a policy repugnant to the declared wishes of the people can only be justified by clear and unmistakable proof of flagrant wrong-doing on the part of the provincial authority.

You have there the admission by the government of Manitoba themselves that they never denied the jurisdiction of this Parliament, but what they denied was the right of this Government to interfere in the way proposed without investigating the subject in a proper and friendly spirit as they had more than once asked should be done. The first duty of the Dominion Government when this appeal of the minority was brought before them six long years ago was at once to apply to the government of Manitoba, to treat with them and to endeavour to settle the question amicably. Sir, they failed to do that. But when we came into power the very first thing we did was that which should have been done by gentlemen opposite—we applied at once to the government of Manitoba. The government of Manitoba responded. They sent here their Attorney General. We conferred. All I can say at the present time is that I have every reason to hope, every reason to believe, that when again this Parliament assembles, this question will have been settled satisfactorily to all parties concerned. Sir, when I say that this question will have been set-

Mr. LAURIER.

tled satisfactorily to all let me make one exception. I know full well that any settlement we can make, however just, however fair, however meritorious it may be, it is condemned in advance by those extreme men who are ready to exact their pound of flesh even though they are cutting it out of the very heart of their country, those men who, whether they belong to one section of the Conservatives or the other are to-day sharpening their knives, in order to obtain from the bleeding corpse of their country, not justice but the satisfaction of revenge. These men I do not expect ever to satisfy. But I expect we shall be able to satisfy all reasonable men, all right-minded men, all those who, whatever may be their views upon this question, are prepared for the sake of peace, harmony and good-fellowship, to make some sacrifice upon the altar of their common country even of opinion and preference. And I hope that when we appeal to the sense of fair-play of justice and generosity in behalf of a united Canada, it will meet with a clear and unmistakable response from all classes. But I should despair of the future of my country, not merely as to the settlement of this question but as to the settlement of every other question which may come up if the tactics followed by the hon. gentleman opposite and his friends were to prevail in this country, if those who blow hot and cold who to-day are vociferously clamouring against the policy which they supported no later than the month of June were to prevail.

Sir, the hon. gentleman dealt a few moments ago with a subject which I was not surprised that he should tackle, because it is one which I am sure must have caused him some uneasiness and even pain as a Canadian for some time, because he cannot but regret, I hope, at all events, that he does regret the language which he made use of on former occasions. The hon. gentleman has at last taken issue with me because I reproached him that upon that question he had made an appeal to feelings of race and religious prejudice. Well, Sir, I accept the challenge, and I repeat to-day in his presence the charge which I preferred against him throughout the provinces I visited during the late election. Here in the great assizes of the nation, before the assembled representatives of the people, I arraign the hon. gentleman and his friends for that in the late election they did their utmost to arouse the religious prejudices not only of the people of Quebec but those of the Protestant and English speaking provinces as well. Let us join issue at once. The hon. gentleman quoted the speech he delivered at Winnipeg. Let me quote it again.—I think the very words that he read:

To my Conservative friends who have turned their backs upon me I want to make another appeal, and it is this: I want to know where is the man with any brains in his head, where is the man who has any capacity for exercising