

l'Âme de l'enfance et de la jeunesse. Que ce soit là notre réponse aux attaques injustes, aux accusations mensongères dont Québec est l'objet, dans un temps où l'union et la bonne entente sont indispensables, si nous voulons que notre pays traverse sans catastrophe la crise actuelle.

Je voudrais que tous nos calomniateurs fussent ici, ce matin, afin d'apprendre comment peut se résoudre le problème posé dans tous les pays où il y a diversité de races et de religions. Ce problème, la province de Québec l'a résolu avec succès, en mettant constamment en pratique ce sage principe que nous ont légué les pères de la Confédération: *Justice et droits égaux*, par tout le Canada, pour les deux grandes races qui ont établi et développé ce pays; *liberté de langue et de croyance*, par tout le Canada, pour les descendants des vaillants fondateurs de notre patrie commune.

Si ce principe était reconnu dans toutes les provinces du Dominion, la paix et l'union régneraient au Canada, et l'orage qui nous menace n'aurait jamais eu l'occasion d'amonceler les nuages qui obscurcissent actuellement notre horizon politique.

Quoi qu'il arrive, soyons fidèles en cette province à l'esprit qui nous a valu, depuis 1867, le grand privilège de vivre dans une paix profonde, grâce à une véritable entente cordiale.

M. l'Inspecteur général des écoles protestantes répond aussi au nom de ses confrères:

Mr. Superintendent and Gentlemen,

It is my duty and my pleasure to thank you, Mr. Superintendent, on behalf of the Protestant inspectors for calling this Congress and also for the address to which we have listened from you. The task is easier after the able remarks of my colleague, Mr. Magnan, in so far as expressing our appreciation of your good-will is concerned. I have only to second what has been said by Mr. Magnan.

But I must also refer to your courtesy in making part of your address in our mother tongue. But let me assure you, Sir, that the Protestant inspectors understand the French language, and they have appreciated the profound seriousness of your statements with reference to the importance of education.

It is a serious time. The world war has many lessons to the present generation, and to us who have to deal with the question of public education. I think they are very profound lessons. Whatever we may think of the moral nature of the teaching in the schools of Germany,—of that teaching of history, for instance, which glorifies Germany above all other countries and has created the desire of world domination,—we have to admit that German education is, in things industrial and scientific, most efficient, indeed terribly efficient. The school system which began in the kingdom of Prussia in the year 1810, upon the advice of the Baron Von Stein, has certainly accomplished much for all Germany in a material way, and if we look for a lesson as to the weakness which a nation may manifest when it is without a proper system of general education, we have only to look at the condition of Russia at the present moment.

What we will have before us for a long time in Canada, after this war is ended, will be most difficult economic problems. A vast debt has to be met; industry and trade in many directions have to be re-adjusted, but the greatest problem of all will be that of agricultural production along the most economic lines. It is just here that the progress of our educational system and especially that which is concerned with the rural schools is of such essential importance. It is through them that agricultural efficiency in particular must be looked for, and the efforts of all who are present to-day will be called upon to aid in this grand task.

Permit me to give one more illustration of the value of education in national life. It is one that I use frequently when addressing the ratepayers. Take the case of Japan, that country which had had a civilisation, high in art at any rate, for three thousand years, but which did not adopt a modern system of education until 1880. In the year 1868 Japan adopted a modern system of government, but it was only in 1880 that the schools were started. But they were started then in an effectual manner. To-day there are about 12,000,000 children at school in Japan, and they have every form of school and university and technical school that western countries possess. What has been the result? In 1880 the whole foreign trade of Japan, import and export, was