

this movement serve political purposes, without considering the fearful consequences that would thereby result to the interests of the minority, is deserving of severe censure. If that movement, as directed by some of its chiefs, had succeeded, the French-speaking population of to-day would stand perfectly isolated from the rest of the population in Canada, would lose its privileges for ever, and thus lose the constitutional advantages given to it by 40 years at least of efforts and loyalty to its political friends. In this connection, I cannot express too highly the gratitude I feel at the conduct of the three French-speaking Ministers in the Cabinet who had patriotism, soul and heart enough to resist the onslaught of public opinion excited at the moment and calling on them to resign. When the ship is in danger, and the storm raging, it is not the time for the pilot to desert her. In connection with this movement, which was nothing else but an exaggeration of a noble and chivalric feeling, a sentiment of humanity, I must say the minority should acknowledge the fair treatment which has been and is being extended to us by the majority of the population of Canada. It is true that we, the minority, have not always been able to obtain all we wanted; and in matters of opinion, we have had in many instances to submit to the rule of the majority; but who can say that the majority has not loyally admitted the minority to share with them the sum of the advantages which result from our constitutional liberties? In what country in the world will you find a French minority, will you find a Catholic minority, as free, untrammelled, and as respected as we are in Canada, although the majority has not with us, in common, either language, aspirations or national genius; and I am sure that our friends of the majority will agree with us, that justice, tolerance and respect for vested rights are the only basis of the greatness of a nation. It becomes the majority to respect the sentiments of the minority, and if this minority is very sensitive, you must not forget that its sensitiveness is due to the fact that it feels that it is a minority. The agitation that took place last fall, the threats uttered every day in some of the leading Ontario newspapers, caused, to the population in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, the most grievous anxiety. You must remember, Sir, that this population are living 1,500 miles from here, and they were alarmed lest the policy of a national coalition would prevail, and the rights, privileges, and even the existence of the minorities in Manitoba and the North-West Territories be attacked; we saw, on the other hand, that the agitation in Quebec was being worked to the advantage of party, and threatened to cause essential interests