

duty to express its deep regret that the sentence of death passed upon Louis Riel, convicted of high treason, was allowed to be carried into execution ;" and the motion of Sir Hector Langevin : "That this question be now put."

**Sir ADOLPHE CARON.** Mr. Speaker : Last night, at an hour far advanced, I moved the adjournment of this debate. For several days the time of this House has been occupied in the discussion of this most important subject, and I must say that I hail with pleasure the opportunity which is furnished me to-day of submitting to Parliament and to the country the view which I have taken from the beginning of the now historical Riel question, and the reasons which actuated me in the conduct which I considered it my duty to take in reference to it. Of all the charges that can be levelled against a public man, of all the grave accusations which can be brought against a public man in the discharge of his official duties, I think the most infamous is that of being a traitor to his country, a traitor to his people. For weeks, nay, for months, my hon. colleagues and myself have been traduced before public opinion in our Province. We have been accused of being traitors to our blood and traitors to our Province. Sir, I wish to ask to-day how came it that we could have laid ourselves open to such a grave charge. I want to know how it is possible that men, who for years and years have enjoyed the confidence of their countrymen, of the friends who support us in Parliament, should have rendered themselves guilty of the charge which has been brought against us. Sir, under circumstances of extreme difficulty, knowing as we did know, and as it was our duty to know, what public opinion was in the Province of Quebec in regard to this question, we have been charged with being traitors to our people and our Province, because we allowed the law to take its course. We did so because we considered it our duty not to interfere with the carrying out of the sentence against Louis Riel. Mr. Speaker, I consider it my duty ; I consider, moreover, that I would not be displaying that courage which every public man should possess in the performance of the duties entrusted to him, if I were not to state, from my place, to Parliament and the country, that if similar circumstances should arise again to those which took place last year, I should do exactly as I did on that occasion. I do not wish, Sir, to be misunderstood. I felt, and I feel to-day, more than I can express, how painful was the duty which we were called upon to perform. I felt that it was not a light thing to sever those ties, political and social, which had bound me to those friends and countrymen who had entrusted me with their confidence and who withdrew it on that occasion. But I felt that it was my imperative duty to my own Province of Quebec, which I love so much, to take the course I did ; and I say again, notwithstanding what hon. gentlemen opposite may say, that if the same circumstances should arise again, I would do exactly as I did before. Sir, I am glad to be able to say that since this debate commenced it has, with few exceptions, been conducted in a manner befitting the gravity of the question under discussion, and in a manner of which we have no reason to be ashamed. In doing my little share in this discussion, and in the presentation of my views, I hope I shall be able to follow that which has already been set by several hon. gentlemen, and that I shall do so without injuring the feelings of those who differ with me. Sir, I think I am expressing the opinion of all my friends, which opinion has already been expressed by my hon. colleague the Minister of Interior, in saying that we all feel proud in having as a member of this House, the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier), in view of the speech which he made last night. It was a speech of which I believe I am safe in saying any Parliament could be proud, and in discussing the question which to him, coming from the Province of Quebec, as to

me coming from the same Province, is one certainly which must have appealed to his feelings, as he showed it did during the delivery of that speech,—I say, he has conducted the discussion in such a way as I hope will have a beneficial effect on the whole debate. I have said that I considered it was my bounden duty to my country, to my Province, to act as I have acted as an adviser of the Crown. Mr. Speaker, as Ministers of the Crown, occupying, as we do, the Treasury benches, we are here representing, not one individual Province but the whole Dominion of Canada. I deemed it was an obligation for us, occupying those positions, to maintain the peace and order in the Dominion. I considered it our duty to maintain the credit of this country at home and abroad. I considered that was our duty as Ministers of the Crown, responsible for the peace of the citizens inhabiting this country. I say more. We know, from the public documents of this Parliament, how much treasure Canada has been investing for the purpose of bringing to our vast and fertile prairies of the west, the population of the overcrowded centres of Europe. It is necessary, if we are to hold out inducements to immigrants to come to Canada and to settle in happy homes in our country, to show that Canada can protect those who entrust their future to her care. It is necessary for us to show that, whether in the extreme North-West or in the older Provinces, the Government of Canada is sufficiently strong to protect her people and to maintain law and order. It was important from that standpoint that there should be no uncertain sound about the action of the Government. It was important that it should be known abroad, in the old country and all over Canada that the Dominion was strong enough, vast as are her territories, to maintain, as I have stated, law and order in every portion of her domains. We have, moreover,—and this is a most important feature, as I understand it, in the present debate—thousands of an Indian population in the North-West. I believe every man who desires to see Canada advancing and prosperous must feel that, having acquired those territories which formerly were the uncontested homes of the Indians, we should be true and loyal to those whom we have taken under our protection. We have a large number of Indians in that territory who have a right to expect that they shall be loyally and kindly treated, that the treaties into which they have entered with the Government shall be scrupulously carried out ; but it is of the greatest importance that they should also learn that peace and order must be maintained in those territories. It is of the greatest importance that they should understand that whatever grounds there may be for agitation, there is a constitutional way of agitating. A constitutional agitation will always achieve results much more satisfactory than those secured by violence ; and I say, therefore, that, whatever the complaint may be, the people of Canada should understand that they can only agitate in a constitutional way without appealing to force, violence and arms. Under those circumstances we felt that it was of the utmost necessity that we should allow the law of the land to take its course in the case of Louis Riel, and not to interfere with the carrying out of the sentence which had been passed. It would be useless for me, after the speeches which have already been delivered, to enter into the question of the origin of the Riel risings in the North-West. We all know the circumstances which led to the first rising. We know that Louis Riel, in 1870, organised a rebellion in the North West ; and it must be remembered that when the case which is now under review by this Parliament, is dealt with, that the second revolt and trouble which took place was also the work of the man who had originated and perpetrated the first. By organising those two revolts among the half-breeds, whom he so shamefully deceived, and which, for a moment, threatened to call into play all the Indian population of the North-West, it cannot be denied that Riel rendered himself guilty of one of the