

attracted considerable public attention. It is an article written by Mr. S. E. Dawson, of Montreal, and I will quote a few sentences from it just to show what is the true feeling of the Protestant minority in the Province of Quebec in regard to those pretended grievances:

"The English Protestant minority in the Province of Quebec ought to be very unhappy, if for no other reason, because so many estimable people in the sister Provinces and to the United States seem to be distressed on their account. It is not pleasant to be the object of so much solicitude. Besides, it is too late. The doctrine of 'States' rights' has been so persistently maintained by the other Provinces, especially by New Brunswick and Ontario, that it is impossible to deny to the French in Quebec those powers which the English majorities in the other Provinces have successfully asserted. What assistance, then, the other Provinces can afford to the minority of Quebec does not clearly appear, even if that minority shared generally in the gloomy apprehensions left elsewhere on their account.

"The English minority ought also to be unhappy because of the civil and religious disadvantages which it would appear from outside sources that they are obliged to endure. And, then, if perchance any one of the minority faintly suggests that he cannot perceive anything unusually hard in his lot—anything beyond what falls to minorities elsewhere—he is chidden by 'superior persons' for not realising his abject condition. So that he becomes discouraged because he is not unhappy enough to please his neighbors.

"For, after all, in real deed, the most of us who have long resided in this Province do not find it in the least disagreeable. Unless the Anglo-Saxon mind is at an early age familiarised with other races and religions, it is apt to form fixed ideas. And so it often happens that the French Roman Catholic, as imagined by our outside friends, is different from the person we come in daily contact with. An Englishman may dwell a life-time in peace in the heart of French Canada. Nobody will leave tracts at his door or give them to his children. He may be on excellent terms, and even exchange hospitalities, with the *coeur*; but if that reverend gentleman should feel any doubts about his host's future state, he will never be disagreeable enough to express them."

Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is, unfortunately, the position of affairs in the Province of Quebec since the beginning of this agitation. Nobody knows where the evil is. The evil does not exist; but our Protestant friends in the Province of Quebec, who have not complained, are taken to task and are lectured because they do not understand that they are unhappy, even if they do not see it or feel it. Mr. Speaker, what is the principle, or rather the negation of principle, at the bottom of the Bill presented by my hon. friend from Simcoe? It is coercion in a matter where coercion cannot exist. Coercion has been tried in several countries in matters of language and religion, and everywhere it has been tried the result has been contrary not only to expectations, but in a large measure contrary to the wish of those who have employed such means. Now, it is a very sad thing to see how the lessons of history are lost for our Equal Rights people, and how much, by neglecting this part of their education, they are drifting into a channel of narrow ideas. During the early part of the British regime in Canada, compulsion and coercion was tried with a view of welding together the different elements of population, so as to form a homogeneous nation, and it was always found that this coercion had a result quite contrary to what was expected. The most enlightened of our governors have declared time and again that the only way to strengthen British rule in Canada was to conciliate the King's new subjects. Such was the opinion of General Murray, of Lord Dorchester, of Sir J. Prevost, and of many others, including and foremost amongst them,

Lord Elgin. The Equal Righters, who are also, most of them, Imperial Federationists, think differently; but I may tell them that if their aim is to perpetuate British institutions in America by sowing the seed of dissatisfaction, they are wide of the mark. There is one consideration which naturally springs from what I have just said. It is this: That they appear to have lost sight of the broad policy inaugurated by the English Government years ago, but they should not overlook the fact that if they can boast to-day of the title of British citizens, which they profess to value so much, they owe it to the ancestors of the very people they seem to hate and despise. What would have become of the British rule in the wars of Independence and of 1812, if French Canada, instead, I do not say of fighting, but of being loyal, — had simply remained neutral. None but stone-blind men would say that this Canada of ours would still be a British country. It is a matter of history that the Governors of Canada in olden times would arrive here induced with prejudices against the "Canadians," and that, after studying the country, these prejudices would make way for sounder notions leading to a change of policy. Immediately after the conquest, General Murray wrote to the Home Government in praise of the King's new subjects. Lieutenant-General Carleton, who, during the war of Independence, was saved from falling into the hands of American soldiers in his flight from Montreal to Quebec by a Canadian officer—General Carleton was a fast friend of the people he was expected by some newly landed emigrant to crush out of existence. I could lengthen this list until your patience would be exhausted; but I must turn to things of the day, and say, that I am amazed to see men, very few I hope, brought up in contact with us, having for years professed the greatest friendship, accepted the hand extended to them, suddenly turn around on the Government to persecute and hound down the men they were so friendly to some months ago. I am amazed to find men of the day, aspiring to be the leaders of the people, reversing the policy inaugurated by men whose position placed them above the passions of the moment. When I see that the first Governors under the British rule, before the Quebec Act of 1774, and even during the military rule, condescended to publish the laws and the ordinances in French, I have a right to express my surprise that this meagre measure of justice appears in the eyes of certain gentlemen to be too large for the French population of the western Territories. French was used, more than a century ago, to bring the ordinances before the people, and that, after a terrible war, when vanquished and conquerors were face to face; and now, after a union of over one century, this simple act of justice, of international courtesy, which costs the country the enormous sum of five hundred dollars a year, is considered out of place and too generous. If you expect to make a great country with such ideas you are sadly mistaken. Sir Henry Sumner Maine and Sir Alfred Lyell have claimed as one of the brightest titles of Great Britain to the admiration of the civilised world that, following the example of Rome, which left the conquered people their customs and institutions, England, in its acquisitions of territory, granted to the Crown's new subjects their former laws and customs. If we look at the British Empire we find it carrying into effect this generous