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HON. CHARLES FITZPATRICK

HIS MAGNIFICENT SPEECH ON THE NORTHWEST AUTONOMY BILLS

The Glory of Catholic History in Canada—History of the Northwest Territories—The Voice of Patriotism Calls for Harmony and United Effort.

The following is the Hansard report of the speech delivered by Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick, Minister of Justice, on the Northwest Provincial Government Bills in the House of Commons on May 3—

Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick (Minister of Justice)—Mr. Speaker, much has been said and much more written since this Bill was first introduced in the interest of peace and harmony, and which, in the interest of truth and justice, might better have been left unsaid and unwritten. I hasten to add that, having followed closely the debate in this House and heard or read all the speeches, I must admit at once that, due allowance being made for the heat of party conflict which appears to be inseparable from our political debates, that with perhaps two or three exceptions, no speech has been made here which could offend the ears of even the most sensitive among us. I must of necessity, Mr. Speaker, take up at some length the attention of the House to discuss those things which, in my judgment, are material and important. I will therefore not waste any of your time or mine in answering the idle vapourings of those who, for reasons which I have never been able to understand, have seized with avidity on every opportunity that offered, to sow the seed and fan the flame of racial and religious discord in this country. Faithful to the best traditions of their party, some of the Conservative newspapers have been fair and just in their criticism of this Bill. Others, unmindful of their obligations to the public, and substituting personal abuse for argument, deliberately misrepresenting the purposes and objects of this legislation, have not hesitated to appeal, for what motive I cannot understand, to the lowest and the vilest passions of our depraved human nature.

I shall not attempt to follow them in the path on which they have chosen to enter. Those of them who are worthy of consideration I will leave to the punishment which must inevitably come in the hours of calm reflection and sober second thought.

I will only say that the record of the Catholic Church and of its clergy is writ large on every page of the history of the world, and of the history of this country in particular. And so long as loyalty to our institutions, and so long as the spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion to duty are held in esteem among us, so long will the names of Catholic priests and prelates hold foremost places on the honour roll of Canada. It is not necessary to go over the ground already covered by my eloquent friend from Lachine (Mr. Bourassa), but let me mention the names of Jogues, Lallemand and Brebeuf, French Canadian Catholic martyrs who, in the early days of our history gave to the world examples of the noblest courage that ever steered the heart of man, that of giving testimony unto death for the convictions of the soul.

As I listened a few days ago to the admirable speech of my friend from East Middlesex (Mr. Elson), when he told us that he was a native-born Canadian, that there was no portion of the earth in which he felt so much interest as in that which is bounded by the outer boundaries of Canada, that there were no people who lived and moved and had their being upon the face of the globe in whom he felt so much interest as in those persons who are Canadians and who at least live on Canadian soil, the thought occurred to me, how much more truly does the sentiment he so eloquently expressed apply to the Canadians of French origin who have never known any other country, whose traditions, associations, and every hope for the future are connected exclusively with Canada. If we want really to understand the meaning of patriotism, let us listen to the French Canadians.

singing their national anthem, the opening words of which are: "O Canada, mon pays, mes amours." I have heard it assigned as a reason to justify the active interest Ontario is taking in this question, that the present population of the Northwest is made up, in large part, of the overflow of the cradles of that province. That is true, but should we not remember that if we must be mindful of the present needs and of the future prosperity of those who have entered into the possession of that great heritage, where it is said that men may turn and seed their plough furrows by the mile and then at the end look out over a sea of golden grain reaching out to the horizon, at the same time we should not be altogether unmindful of the religious convictions, the wishes and desires, and even the prejudices, of those men the heroism and enterprise of whose ancestors made the present possession of those lands by Canada possible. I am reminded here of what George Brown said during the federation debates when this question of the acquisition of the Northwest was being considered:

It has always appeared to me that the opening up of the Northwest ought to be one of the most cherished projects of my honorable friends from Lower Canada. During the discussion on the question for some years back I had occasion to dip deep in Northwest lore—into those singularly interesting narratives of life and travels in the Northwest in the olden time, and into the history of the struggles for commercial dominancy in the great fur-bearing regions. And it has always struck me that the French Canadian people have cause to look back with pride to the bold and successful part they played in the adventures of those days. Nothing, perhaps has tended more to create their present national character than the vigorous habits, the power of endurance, the aptitude for outdoor life, acquired in their prosecution of the Northwest fur trade. (Hear, hear.) Well may they look forward with anxiety to the realization of this part of our scheme, in confident hope that the great northwestern traffic shall be once more opened up to the hardy French Canadian traders and voyagers.

Who were the men who, in the long ago, sailed up the broad bosom of the mighty St. Lawrence, discovered Lake Superior, penetrated to the shores of Lake Winnipeg, explored the banks of the Saskatchewan, founded Fort La Corne, Fort Bourbon and Fort La Jonquiere, and first stood within the shadow of the Rocky mountains?

I shall not pursue this matter further. Let me say that two great streams of race and descent met in Canada, and well may the world be challenged to point to a nobler lineage. Protestant England and Catholic France have been rivals on many fields, and through many ages, but taken together their record of achievement whether in peace or in war, entitled them to a front place among the nations of the earth. And let us not forget that each has given the best of its noblest blood to cement the nationhood of Canada. Providence has placed the two nations here, side by side, we must of necessity live together, and let us live in peace and work in harmony for the best interest of our common country.

A retrospective glance at the his-

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tory previous to 1870, of that portion of Rupert's Land and of the Northwestern Territories, for which we are now legislating, may possibly enable us better to understand the position they now occupy and the nature and extent of our obligations towards the people of those lands. On May 22nd, 1870, a charter was granted incorporating the Gentlemen Adventurers of the Hudson Bay. By this charter the company secured the sole trade and commerce of all those "seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks, and sounds in whatsoever latitude they might be that lay within the straits now called Hudson Straits, together with all the lands and territories upon the countries, coasts and confines of such seas, bays, etc., that were not then actually possessed by or granted to any of His Majesty's subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any Christian prince or state." The area covered by this grant has been frequently discussed, but it is not to my knowledge that the confines of the grant have ever been accurately defined. In addition to the grants to exclusive trade and to the soil, the entire legislative, judicial and executive power was vested in the company. And let me here observe that two French Canadian gentlemen, Messrs. Raddisson and De Grosseil, first discovered the overland communication between Canada and Hudson Bay, and with these gentlemen originated the idea of the Hudson Bay Company. In 1749, an unsuccessful attempt was made in the Imperial Parliament to deprive the company of its charter for non-use. The company had at that time four or five forts on the coast of Hudson Bay, and in its service about 120 men. After the session of Canada in 1763, numerous fur traders spread over the same country, and finally these individual speculators combined into the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal. I need not refer to the settlement effected in that country under the auspices of Lord Selkirk, but I would like to refer to the license granted in 1821 to the Hudson Bay Company and the Northwest Company, which two companies were then amalgamated. That license, which was for 21 years, gave to these two companies the monopoly of the trade in regions lying to the west and northwest of the Hudson Bay Company's grant. That is the origin of this intrusion by the Hudson Bay Company upon the country that was then known as the Indian country, and that has become known as the Northwest Territories. In 1830, the Hudson Bay Company acquired rights for itself by arranging with the Northwest Company, and obtained a new license for 21 years. Those who are interested in pursuing this inquiry further, I would refer to the report made in 1857 by Chief Justice Draper to a committee of the British House of Commons then charged with the duty of investigating this question of the title of the Hudson Bay Company, and to the more extensive, more accurate and more reliable report prepared by the Commissioner of Crown Lands of that time, Hon. Jos. Cauchon. In Mr. Cauchon's report we find the first evidence of a desire on the part of Canada to acquire these Territories. In that report we find it stated:

"That it would be difficult to conceive that it would be adverse to the interests of the country or of the community if the Indian Territories were incorporated with this province."

That is, with the old province of Canada. For ten years thereafter a continuous correspondence was maintained between the Colonial Office and the Canadian Parliament upon the subject of the opening up of the western country, and providing legislation for its welfare and good government. Then we find that in the confederation debates, the subject was pursued further, and Hon. George Brown stated that:

"When recently in England I was charged to negotiate with the Imperial Government for the opening of the Northwest Territories."

On motion of A. T. Galt, Minister of Finance in Canada, the Quebec conference resolved:

"That the communications with the northwestern territory and the improvements required for the development of trade of the great west with the sea-board are regarded by this conference as subjects of the highest importance to the confederation."

During the confederation debates it

was made evident that the construction of the Intercolonial Railway and the opening up of the west with an improved canal system had been decided upon by the conference as being works devolving upon the federation at an early date, and these propositions met with general approval in the Legislature.

Then in the order of time, the next provision we find with reference to the Northwest Territories, is contained in the British North America Act, section 146 of which provides for the admission of Rupert's Land and the Northwestern Territories into the union upon such terms and conditions as are expressed in petitions to be presented by the Houses of Parliament of Canada. And here, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the close attention of the House. It is to be observed that the terms on which the provinces of Prince Edward Island and British Columbia entered the union require the assent of such province to be embodied in addresses from their respective legislatures, as well as the assent of the Dominion to be expressed in an address from the Dominion Parliament. But the terms and conditions on which Rupert's Land and the Territories entered the union, as well as their constitution, depends solely on the terms and conditions to be set forth in the address from the Houses of Parliament of Canada.

In 1867, on the 17th of December, an address of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada was prepared based on a resolution that had been passed the day previous, from which I would venture to make a few extracts. This address set out in the first place that it would—

(a) Promote the prosperity of the Canadian people and conduce to the advantage of the whole empire if the Dominion of Canada were extended westward to the shores of the Pacific ocean.

And next—

(b) That the welfare of a sparse and widely scattered population of British subjects of European origin already inhabiting these remote and unorganized territories would be materially enhanced by the formation therein of political institutions bearing analogy as far as circumstances will admit to those which exist in the several provinces of the Dominion.

That is a paragraph contained in an address presented by the House of Commons of Canada under the terms of section 146 of the British North America Act, 1867, asking that these Territories should form part of our Dominion, and the Imperial authorities are therein asked to cause these Territories to be joined to the Dominion, the Dominion undertaking on its side to give to them political institutions "bearing analogy as far as circumstances will admit to those which exist in the several provinces of the Dominion."

Then further on in the same address I find this paragraph: "And that we do most humbly pray that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased, by and with the advice of your most honorable Privy Council, to unite Rupert's Land and the Northwestern Territory with this Dominion and to grant to the Parliament of Canada authority to legislate for their future welfare and good government."

As will be seen by these addresses, the Imperial authorities were moved to unite Rupert's Land and the Northwestern Territories by Order-in-Council to the Dominion of Canada. These addresses were received in England by an intimation of Her Majesty's willingness to comply with their prayers and that intimation was coupled with a statement to this effect:

"That the law officers of the Crown advise that the requisite power of government and legislation could not be transferred to Canada without an Act of Parliament on account of the existing charter of the Hudson Bay."

The result was that the Rupert's Land Act, 1868, was passed in order to enable Her Majesty to do with respect to Rupert's Land what was in contemplation of virtue of the provisions of section 145 of the British North America Act, and I would like to point out here immediately that Manitoba did not come into confederation, as has been generally supposed by virtue of the provisions of section 145, but that it came in by virtue of the provisions of the Imperial

ENCYCLICAL OF PIUS X.

Teaching of the Catechism

To Our Venerable Brothers Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See.

PIUS X., POPE.

Venerable Brothers, Salutation and Benediction:

At a time of great trouble and difficulty our littleness has been raised by the inscrutable designs of Divine Providence to the office of Supreme Pastor of the entire flock of Christ. Long has the enemy been prowling round the fold, attacking it with such subtle cunning, that now more than ever seems to be verified the prediction made by the Apostle to the elders of the Church of Ephesus: "I know that ravens will enter in among you, not sparing the flock." (Acts xx., 29.)

Those who still cherish zeal for the glory of God are seeking out the causes of this religious decadence. While differing in their conclusions they point out, each according to his own views, different ways for protecting and restoring the Kingdom of God on earth. But to us venerable brothers, it seems that while other reasons may play their part we must agree with those who hold that the main cause of the present lassitude and torpor, as well as of the very serious evils that flow from it, is to be found in the prevailing ignorance about divine things. This fully bears out what God himself affirmed through the Prophet Osee: "And there is no knowledge of God in the land. Cursing and lying and killing and theft and adultery hath touched blood, and blood hath touched blood, therefore shall the earth mourn, and every one that dwelleth in it shall languish." (Osee iv., 1-2.)

It is a common lament, only too well founded, that among Christians there are large numbers who live in utter ignorance of the truths necessary for salvation. And when we say among Christians we mean not only the masses and those in the lower walks of life, who are sometimes not to blame owing to the inhumanity of hard taskmasters whose demands leave them little time to think of themselves and their own interests. We include, and indeed more especially, all those who, while endowed with a certain amount of talent and culture and possessing abundant knowledge of profane matters, have no care nor thought for religion. It is hard to find words to describe the dense darkness that environs these persons; the indifference with which they remain in this darkness is the saddest sight of all. Rarely do they give a thought to the Supreme Author and Ruler of all things or to the teachings of the faith of Christ. Consequently they are absolutely without knowledge of the incarnation of the word of God, of the redemption of mankind wrought by him, of grace which is the chief means for the attainment of eternal welfare, and of the Holy Sacrifice and the Sacraments by which this grace is acquired and preserved. They fail to appreciate the malice and foulness of sin. They have no care to avoid it and free themselves from it. Hence they reach their last day in such a state that the minister of God, anxious to take advantage of the slightest hope of their salvation, is obliged to employ those final moments, which should be consecrated entirely to stimulating the love of God, in imparting brief instruction on the things indispensable for salvation—even then it often happens that the invalid has become so far the slave of culpable ignorance that he considers the successful intervention of the priest and faces calmly the terrible passage to eternity without reconciling himself with God. Our predecessor Penedict XIV., therefore, had good reason to write as he did: "This we asseverate that the majority of those who are condemned to eternal punishment fall into this everlasting misfortune through ignorance of those mysteries of the faith which must be known and believed by all who belong to the elect." (Inst. xxvi., 18.)

In these circumstances, venerable brothers, what wonder is it if to-day we see in the world, not merely among barbarous peoples but in the

very midst of Christian nations a constantly increasing corruption and depravity? The Apostle writing to the Ephesians admonished them: "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be so much as named among you, as becometh saints, or obscenity or foolish talking." (Eph. v., 3-4.) St. Paul hases this holiness and the modesty that curbs the passions on supernatural wisdom: "See therefore, brethren, how you walk circumspectly not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time for the days are evil. Wherefore become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God." (Ibid., 15, 16.) The Apostle had good reason for speaking in this way; for the human will has retained but little of that love of what is honest and just which God the Creator infused into it and which drew it, so to speak, toward the real and not merely apparent good. Depraved as it has become by the corruption of the first sin, and almost forgetful of God its author, its affections are almost entirely turned to vanity and lying. This error will, blinded by perverse passions, has need therefore of a guide to point out the way and lead it back to the paths of justice so unhappily abandoned. This guide, not selected at random, but designated especially by nature, is no other than the intellect. But if the intellect be itself lacking in true light, that is, in the knowledge of divine things, it will be the blind leading the blind and both will fall into the ditch. Holy David, praising God for the light of truth which is flashed from Him upon our minds, said: "The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us." (Ps. iv., 7.) And he described the effect of this light when he added: "Thou hast given gladness in my heart"—the gladness that fills the heart to make it run in the way of the divine commandments.

All this becomes evident on a little reflection. The doctrine of Jesus Christ reveals God and His infinite perfection to us with far greater clearness than does the natural light of the human intellect. What follows? That same doctrine commands us to honor God by faith, which is the homage of our mind; by hope, which is the homage of our will; by charity, which is the homage of our heart; and thus it binds and subjects the whole of man to his Supreme Maker and Ruler. So, too, the doctrine of Christ alone makes known to us the true and lofty dignity of man, by showing him to be the son of the Father who is in heaven, made to his image and likeness and destined to live with him in eternal bliss. From this very dignity, and from the knowledge that man has of it, Christ showed the obligation of all men to love one another like brothers, as they are, commands them to live here below as children of light, "not in rioting," to quote the words of the Apostle, "and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy." (Rom. xiii., 13.) Christ likewise commands men to place all their solicitude in God, since He has care of us, orders us to stretch forth a helping hand to the poor, to do good to those who do evil to us, to prefer the eternal good of the soul to the fleeting things of time. Not to go too far into detail, is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ that inspires proud man with the love of humility, which is the source of true glory? "Whoever shall humble himself" * * * he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii., 4.) From the same doctrine we learn Prudence of the spirit, by means of which we are enabled to shun the prudence of the flesh, Justice which teaches us to give every one his due, Fortitude which makes us ready to suffer all things, and by means of which we do in fact heroic acts, suffer all things for the sake of God and eternal happiness, and, finally, temperance, through which we find it possible to love even poverty for the sake of the kingdom of God and actually to glory in the cross, paying no heed to contempt. In fine, the science of Christianity is a fount not only of light for the intellect, enabling it to attain truth, but of warmth to the will, whereby we raise ourselves up to God and unite ourselves with Him in the practice of virtue.

We indeed do not mean to say that a knowledge of religion may not be joined with a perverse will and

(Continued on page 5.)

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