

The following pages are the verbatim reproduction of four articles published in English in Le Devoir, from the 11th to the 14th of March 1914.

The Mayoralty of Montreal

The Racial Issue

For a number of years, it has been the custom in Montreal of electing alternately an English- and a French-speaking mayor. To that usage there was no basis in law, in tradition or in equity: it was a pure evidence of courtesy and good will on the part of the French majority. Curiously enough, while a large number of English-speaking residents of Montreal have developed the conviction that they have a *right* to that alternate representation at the head of the civic administration, a counter-sentiment is fast spreading in the French community. That sentiment is being expressed in various terms and with different degrees of feeling and heat. It can be accurately compassed in three or four propositions, some of direct application to the present situation in Montreal, others bearing on the general relations between French and English (1) in Canada: "The English have no *right*, in law or equity, to rule the civic affairs of Montreal." — "The usage of electing alternately an English- and a French-speaking mayor is not a matter of *right* and ought not to become a *precedent*." — "The English-speaking minority of Montreal, as a whole, have not shown such sympathy to us that they deserve any special consideration." — "The English at large talk profusely of fair-play and broadmindedness when and where they are in the minority; they seldom put those virtues in practice, where they are the majority and when they can afford to assert their supremacy."

Those words are heard everywhere — on the street, in the tramways, in private circles. They are symptomatic of a deep change in the dispositions of the French-Canadians towards their English-speaking fellow-citizens.

(1) Frequent mentions are made of "French" or "English", instead of "French speaking" or "English-speaking" Canadians or people. This is merely for the sake of shortness of speech. I refer only to the two main groups of Canadians as divided by language.

I also beg the English reader to make due allowance for all the in-corrections of a hurried and unrevised piece of work. He must not forget that my English prose is the product of the "primitive" bilingual school of French Quebec.