



"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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Hon. Senator Bernier's GREAT SPEECH

as reported in THE SENATE DEBATES
(Continued.)

I have heard some say that we were ready to accept the propositions stated in the memorials of the delegates sent a year ago to Winnipeg by the late government—and it is added that the present settlement does not substantially differ from those propositions. In reply I say, 1st, that the propositions of the commissioners were intended only to be a basis for subsequent negotiations between the minority and the parties interested; 2nd, that the minority has never accepted those propositions; and 3rd, that they differ materially from the present settlement. In support of this third assertion I have only to quote the words of Mr. Cameron in this regard:

It has been charged that the government (of Manitoba) has acted perfidiously inasmuch as the terms of the Settlement are substantially the offer made by the Dominion commissioners a year ago. Such is, however, very far indeed from being the case.

The charge was precisely the opposite of the truth; there was not the slightest resemblance between the commissioners' offer and the offer of to-day.

In fact, the government of Manitoba rejected the offer last year, as they call it, as giving, in their opinion, to the minority their separate schools; they accept the offer of this year because it rejects for ever the separate schools. The offer of last year recognized our rights; the offer of this year is practically a burial of those rights.

There is one great difference between the position taken by the late administration and the position taken by the present government. It is this: that the commissioners last year were positively instructed not to make any settlement which would not be satisfactory to the minority. This year the government makes a final settlement without any regard for the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the minority.

Now, as to the minority having expressed their willingness to accept as a basis of settlement the propositions laid down in the memorial of the commissioners of last year, there is not the slightest ground for the assertion. His Grace the Archbishop of Saint Boniface declared his disapproval of them. I have also expressed my own dissent from a settlement upon the lines of those propositions. I beg permission to read to this House a letter which I addressed to the Prime Minister, as soon as an official statement could be had in connection with that mission:

I claim full justice for the minority, and the proposals of the commissioners do not extend to us that full justice. Consequently it is my duty to mark my dissent from such proposals as being inadequate to the requirements of the case. It is useless to add that I still further dissent from the proposals of the Manitoba government. It is my request that this my dissent be brought to the knowledge of the cabinet.

This makes our position in this regard unassailable. Let us refer briefly to the Remedial Bill of last year. That bill gave us:

1. A Catholic board of education.
2. A Catholic superintendent of education.
3. Catholic school inspectors.
4. Catholic school teachers everywhere and independent of the number of children.
5. Catholic school trustees.

6. Catholic examiners.
7. Catholic normal schools.
8. The selection of the text books.

9. The right of levying taxes for the support of our own schools.

10. Exemption from taxes for the support of other schools.

11. It affirmed our rights to share proportionately in the legislative grant for educational purposes.

Now, the present settlement does not grant us any of the above privileges. It does not even recognize our right to any of them, and yet it is tried to make us believe that it is preferable. It is a wonder to me that any one should persist in such an attempt to misrepresent the situation. I will not insist upon that, however, because it seems to me that the mere mention of the facts is sufficient to do away with all misapprehensions in this regard. But I want to insist on one of the features of that bill. It was an undoubted sanction of the rights of the Catholic minority of Manitoba, and, above all, it was a sanction of the principles upon which the constitution is founded with regard to such matters; it declared that minorities could depend on the federal powers for their protection; and the recognition of those principles by the final adoption of the law would have resulted in peace and harmony all through the Dominion, because, with the triumph of that policy, any future desire in any of the provinces to encroach upon the rights of minorities would have been discouraged and quited for ever. This was sufficient to enlist in favour of the bill the sympathies of every sincere champion of the constitution. But it is said that our position might have been made uncomfortable by litigation. When the minority gave its approval to the Remedial Bill, it knew that litigation was ahead; but we knew, at the same time, that, with the judgment of the Privy Council behind us, with the remedial order behind us, with the Imperial guarantees behind us, with the "parliamentary compact" behind us, we were in a position to enter into new contests with a reasonable expectation of coming off from the same with flying colours. We were ready then to go into litigation, while if we accepted the present settlement we could not even have the idea of going into litigation at all. All grounds of success would be cut from under our feet. Our cause would be crippled for ever.

Make a compromise, suggest others; let the process of give and take operate. But, hon. gentlemen, what shall we give? We have had a genuine jewel stolen, and it is proposed to let the thief go provided he gives back a false stone. This is no compromise. It is all gain on one side, and all loss on the other. But, hon. gentlemen, there are some reasons of a higher order to be advanced against a compromise. The education of their children is to the minority a matter of conscience, and in such matters, as I have already pointed out, the yeas and nays do not obtain, and although the hon. leader of this House has ventured to say that in his opinion our conscientious views had been fairly met by the settlement, we must decline, with all due deference, his teaching in such matters. He is not a judge as

to what my religious belief exacts from me, any more than I could be a judge for him in like matters. I am surprised at the suggestion coming from certain gentlemen. For instance, the hon. senior member for Halifax is one of the most uncompromising men in this House. Even on trifling things he holds steadfast to his views. But, strange enough, when it comes to the sacred interests of the souls of our children, he advocates a compromise. This, I cannot conceive. But I must take the fact as it is, and tell my hon. colleague that the Catholic minority in Manitoba begs leave not to act upon his advice.

The hon. premier, Mr. Laurier, said some time ago, that the minority, through their solicitor, had not asked for a restoration of their denominational schools, and the hon. leader of this House has repeated, in substance, the same assertion. I must take exception to such a statement. What the minority asked for is a matter that can very easily be ascertained. We have only to refer to its memorials and petitions. Our demands are couched therein in the following words:

(3.) That it may be declared that the said last mentioned Acts do affect the rights and privileges of the Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education.

(4.) That it may be declared that to Your Excellency the Governor General in Council, it seems requisite that the provisions of the statutes in force in the province of Manitoba prior to the passage of the said Acts, should be re-enacted in so far at least as may be necessary to secure to the Roman Catholics in the said province the right to build, maintain, equip, manage, conduct and support these schools in the manner provided for by the said statutes, to secure to them their proportionate share of any grant made out of the public funds for the purposes of education and to relieve such members of the Roman Catholic church as contribute to such Roman Catholic schools from all payment, or that the said Acts of 1890 should be so modified or amended as to effect such purposes.

That is what Mr Ewart was requested to ask as the minimum of our rights—that is what he prayed for, and the best evidence that he never asked for less is the fact that both the Privy Council and the Governor General in Council have granted the whole of our demands, as contained in our petitions. No tribunal ever grants more than what is prayed for.

Mr. Ewart has cheerfully espoused our cause, he has fulfilled his duties with science and devotedness, and it was due to him as well as to ourselves that the statement made here and elsewhere should be at least contradicted.

There are many other things which have been mentioned and to which it would be expedient to give an answer. But I must not trespass too long on your indulgence. I will only refer briefly to a few other matters.

The speech from the throne says that the agreement is "the best arrangement that was obtainable under the existing conditions of this disturbing question."

In answer to that I may say that when the matter was taken into their hands by the late government, if the then opposition had generously offered their cooperation for the settlement of the question, as the present opposition is ready to do every right and privilege to which we are entitled would have been restored to us, the question would have

been settled long ago, and removed from the political arena.

I must not forget to mention before closing my remarks, the fact that the minority in Manitoba has protested against this settlement. Resolutions of complete dissatisfaction have been adopted in each locality where there is a Catholic settlement. That dissatisfaction has been emphasized more particularly in the late election of Saint Boniface where the Greenway candidate himself, in order to save his deposit, had himself to disapprove that settlement.

To justify their former attitude and their present course the government allege that the Remedial Bill was not an efficient remedy. If their solicitude for our interests is so great, why do they not bring in a better measure? They have legal lights in their ranks. Let them frame a bill that will give us all that we are entitled to and that will defy litigation. The present opposition will support them.

And even if there were difficulties ahead there is no statesmanship in avoiding them by a weak surrender. The government of a country has no right to give way before the assailants of the constitution; they must uphold the rights of every section of the people.

Appeal is made to peace. Let me remind the House that we had peace before 1890, we are not the parties who disturbed that peace. Let the guilty parties make the constitutional and equitable concessions they have been commanded to do, and peace and harmony will be restored as before. We need peace and harmony in that distant part of the Dominion for the development of our immense resources.

(To be continued.)

A STRIKING CONTRAST.

(N.Y. Freeman's Journal.)

Toronto, Canada, is a city that has been since its foundation under the domination of Protestantism, the preachers generally having things their own way. One of the amenities of the peculiar civilization enforced there has been that street cars were not allowed to run on Sunday. But at an election held last week this ordinance was condemned, and now the clang of the motorman's bell will be heard on the Sabbath, to the great horror of the once-a-week Christians. Toronto is a remarkable town in many ways. It is ruled by the Orange faction, and the popular musical taste of the locality is content with such lofty themes as "Croppies Lie Down." It bears about the same relative proportion of Catholic to Protestant as is to be inversely found in Montreal. In the latter city, so thoroughly tolerant is the Catholic spirit, alternate Mayors are selected from the two religious bodies; but in Toronto, so intolerant is the Orangeism that rules, a Catholic is never selected for that office. Another curious feature of the situation is that the Protestant clergy of Toronto are always in the thick of political campaigns, no matter what the question at issue. Their meddling is never severely criticised. But, when the Catholic clergy of Montreal give wholesome advice in reference to their schools, it is denounced as clerical intimidation. The inconsistencies of public life are quite instructive.

Conspicuous Anachronisms.

From the Youth's Companion.

A writer at this critical day must be very careful not to get anything or anybody into a story or a poem that did not belong to the epoch of which he is writing. Such an error, which is called an anachronism, subjects him to ridicule.

It is well known that the works of Shakespeare, as was inevitable in the case of a comparatively unlearned man, abound in errors of this sort. He introduces clocks into ancient Rome, and in the production of his plays dressed Cæsar and Coriolanus in the uniform of a British officer.

Shakespeare was well enough in Shakespeare's day, but when a living novelist introduced a typewriter into a scene which was supposed to have occurred at a time not more than five years before typewriters came into common use, he was ridiculed unmercifully.

One modern author who cared very little for the charge of anachronism, though he wrote in the age and in the country of "the document," was Victor Hugo. He introduced into a drama of the time of Charlemagne a priest of the Sorbonne—the famous theological school of Paris—though the Sorbonne was not founded until 400 years after Charlemagne.

But perhaps the mistake which is entitled to be called the "Champion anachronism" of all literature is one which is to be found in Hugo's admirable poem, "Boaz Sleeping," which deals with the story of Ruth. The poet speaks of the earth at this period as "still wet and soft from the Deluge."

According to the most commonly accepted chronology, the flood occurred in the year 2348 B. C. By the same chronology, Ruth was married to Boaz in the year 1226 B. C. By this calculation, upward of eleven hundred years must have elapsed between the two periods—which would seem to have afforded ample time, with ordinary weather, for the earth to get dry.

Healthy Ireland.

During 1896 the death of 188 persons over 90 years of age 14 being over 100, was recorded in Great Britain and Ireland. Average longevity is greater in Scotland than in England, and greater in Ireland than in Scotland, the birthrate being largest in England and least in Ireland. In England the average number over 60 years of age is about 7 per cent., in Scotland 7.7, and in Ireland 10.5.

Inventive Genius Discouraged.

From the Springfield Republican.

A Portland night watchman who "couldn't see any sense in traipsing around the big empty mill every hour to touch the electric buttons," fixed up an automatic arrangement on several of them so that they would repeat every hour. The firm did not take kindly this invention and gave the man a pedometer to carry on his rounds. All went well for two nights but on the morning following the third the old man was found asleep in the engine-room, with the pedometer so attached to the piston-rod that with every stroke it registered a step. It had been travelling all night, and when taken off it registered 209 miles. There is a new watchman on duty now.