(December 4, 1905.)

The French-Canadian.

By Charles Marcil, M.P.

Mr. Charles Marcil, M.P., Ottawa, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, addressed the Club as follows:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I am fortunate to-day in being with you in one respect at least, that is, that it affords me the opportunity of fulfilling a promise which I made over a year ago, and it is always a good thing for a politician to be able to fulfil a promise. (Laughter.) I am glad to meet the Canadian Club of Toronto, because among its members I have met many old friends, and many new faces it is true, but I hope that among them I shall be able later on to count more friends than I had when I came here this morning. The presence at this table of many who are old friends of mine, though not all sharing my views in politics, makes it all the more pleasant, and I must thank you for the very great honor of inviting me here to-day.

The subject I have taken up is a somewhat threadworn one now, "the French-Canadian," but it needed to be explained more some years ago than it does to-day. To-day the people of Ontario, and the people of Toronto especially, are a reading people, and I am glad to say that we have in Quebec a people who are known and appreciated in the Province of Ontario. We have here one of the members for Toronto (Mr. A. E. Kemp, M.P.), who now sits at this table, who heard the discussions during last session. I think he himself is a native of Quebec. But I shall proceed with the few remarks I have to make. This formidable looking manuscript need not scare you, because I shall keep within the time limit given me.

I have come to speak to you of the past and present of what was New France, under the white flag of France; of Lower Canada and the Province of Quebec, under the British flag. I do not hope that my views will be shared by you all, but I venture to say that you will give me credit for sincerity and frankness.

I am a Canadian; you are Canadians, and as a countryman can speak to his countrymen, I will attempt, with your kind indulgence, to speak to you of one of the most romantic and entertaining chapters in the world's history, which to-day forms part and parcel of our common heritage. A great writer on Canadian history, Francis Parkman, in one of his inspired chapters, says of the past of Canada, under French rule:—

"The French dominion is a thing of the past; and when we invoke its departed shades, they rise upon us from their graves in strange romantic guise. Again their ghostly camp fires seem to burn, and the fitful light is cast around on lord and vassal and black-robed priest,

mingled with wild forms of savage warriors, knit in close fellowship on the same stern errand. A boundless vision grows upon us; an untamed continent; vast wastes of forest verdure; mountains silent in primeval sleep; river, lake, and glimmering pool; wilderness oceans mingling with the sky. Such was the domain which France conquered for civilization. Plumed helmets gleamed in the shade of its forests, priestly vestments in its dens and fastnesses of ancient barbarism. Men steeped in antique learning, pale with the close breath of the cloister, here spent the noon and evening of their lives, ruled savage bands with a mild parental sway, and stood serene before the direst shapes of death. Men of knightly nurture, heirs to the polish of a far reaching ancestry, here with their dauntless hardihod put to shame the boldest son of toil."

With such an admission I think I can say: France has done many great things in her history; one entitled to rank among the greatest is the part which her sons played in America, from Jacques Cartier down to Montcalm and Lévis.

This portion of American history extends from 1534 to 1760, a period of 226 years—a long stretch in the history of a new land. Yet it is doubtful if in the history of the whole world there is to be found anywhere more to interest the average man than is to be found in the history of what was "New France."

You have in that period, the hardy discoverer and navigator, the explorer, and coureurs des bois, the founder of cities, the soldier, the colonizer, the missionary and martyr, the saintly woman giving up her life for the benighted children of the forest; in a word, you have one of the most romantic and fascinating chapters in the history of mankind.

You have here unravelled the gallant attempt of a great nation to lay the foundation of a new commonwealth similar unto herself, and actuated primarily by motives of religion and civilization, which appeal to all lovers of what is grand and beautiful. That France failed in the attempt to make this continent her own is no discredit to her or to her sons. The part they have played in its history will live, to their credit, for all time, in strange contrast to the actions of Spain and Portugal.

The territory which her sons discovered and sought to colonize knows her flag no longer; it is inhabited largely by the descendants of other nations who speak another language than that which her sons spoke, and who kneel at other shrines, but her impress shall live for ever in the names which they gave its rivers, its lakes, its mountains. Cities have sprung up on all sides which recall the name of France and her passage on this continent, from the Straits of Belle Isle to the city of New Orleans. Up and down the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi and the Ohio, up the great lakes to the Rockies, in a word from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, cities stand to-day where stood the chapels of her missionaries, the wooden forts of her soldiers, and the cabins of her adventurers, explorers and discoverers. The doings of her

ons and daughters lie deep down in the records of the American contint, and none will ever arouse a greater and deeper interest to the student f future generations than Cartier, the discoverer of Canada; Champlain, he founder of Quebec; de Maisonneuve, the founder of Montreal; Brêeouf and Lallemant, the first Christian martyrs; Nicolet, the explorer of ake Michigan; Joliet, La Salle and Marquette, the discoverers of the Mississippi and the Ohio and the great lakes; the saintly women, Marguerite Bourgeous, Mlle, Mance, Mme. d'Jonville, and Marie de l'Incaration, who founded those sisterhoods which now cover America; de aval, the first Bishop of Quebec, whose diocese extended from ocean to ocean, and finally the heroes of the last struggle, Montcalm and de Lévis, ot to mention a hundred others. (Applause.) No such galaxy of great ien and devoted women could have worked in vain for a land, giving up heir lives for it, without some lasting impression being made.

Providence decreed otherwise than they thought, believed, lived, truggled and died for. For one hundred and fifty years the fate of this ountry has been sealed otherwise than they had hoped for. But it may ell be said that Providence decrees events which are incomprehensible or the moment to men. While it gave England victory over France for ie possession of the northern part of this continent, it so arranged matrs that while an army and a navy of France played no small part in the reation of the republic to the south of us, France's own offspring in this ountry were largely instrumental in keeping Canada for England at a me when insurrection and rebellion were rampant to the south of us—(pplause)—and Ontario and the whole western country was a howling ilderness. It must not be overlooked that for twenty years after the rrender of Quebec, the English-speaking population of Canada was mited largely to the army and officials, and it was only after the defeat f Britain's armies at the hands of her own children that the tide of loyalt immigration rolling towards the north and west, that the settlement f English-speaking Canada properly commenced.

Again in Parkman's "Pioneers of France in the New World" we nd a striking chapter on the origin of the French and English commonealths on this continent, which it is instructive and interesting to conder for a moment, and which may serve as a starting point in the conderations and observations I shall make. After describing the conditions isting at that time in Europe and in New England, Parkman says:—

"We turn to New France and all is reversed. Here was a bold ttempt to crush under the exactions of a grasping hierarchy, to stifle nder the curbs and trappings of a feudal monarchy, a people compassed y influences of the wildest freedom, whose schools were the forest and ie sea, whose trade was an armed barter with savages, and whose daily e a lesson of lawless independence. But this fierce spirit had its vent. he story of New France is from the first a story of war; of war—for so er founders believed—with the adversary of mankind himself; war with

savage tribes and forest commonwealths; war with England, and the encroaching forms of heresy. Her brave, unthinking people were stamped with the soldier's virtues and with the soldier's faults; and in their leaders were displayed, on a grand and novel stage, the energies, the aspirations, and the passions which belong to hopes vast and vague, ill-restricted powers and notions of command.

The power of New England was the result of the aggregate efforts of a busy multitude, each in his narrow circle toiling for himself, to gather competence or wealth. The expansion of New France was the achievement of a gigantic ambition striving to grasp a continent. It was a vain attempt. Long and valiantly her chiefs upheld her cause, leading to battle a vassal population warlike as themselves, borne down by numbers from without, wasted by corruption from within. New France fell at last, and out of her fall grew revolutions whose influence to this hour are felt through every nation of the civilized world."

Harsh as is the judgment of Parkman, and incidentally that of most English-speaking writers, it contains much that is true, but there are certain statements from which I would dissent if time permitted me to enter at greater length into many interesting chapters of the history of New France.

I must pass on to Quebec under the British flag.

After the French and the English had fought their last battle on Canadian soil in 1760, they both settled down to work and very soon found they could agree to make this country prosperous for their mutual benefit. The French population had all the requisites to form the nucleus of a steady and conservative people. From the origin of New France to its last days, the settlers sent from the mother country were of the very best stock, many of them hailing from Normandy, which was no obstacle to their intercourse with the English population who came to make Canada their home under the new regime. Both Generals Murray and Carleton, our two first Governors, have praised the new subjects of the King, to whom, they said, a large measure of justice should be meted out if Great Britain desired to keep her conquest.

When the English colonies rose in rebellion against the Crown, they did everything possible to induce the French-Canadians to come to their side. Our ancestors saw no reason why they should break away from their allegiance, and the leading classes of the time, the clergy and what remained of the noglesse, *i.e.*, "the Seigneurs"—many of whom had gone to France after the Treaty of Paris—became more and more attached to British institutions and more and more friendly to their English countrymen. The French revolution, with all its horrors, was so antipathetic to the monarchical and religious feelings of the French inhabitants that they severed all ties of relationship with France and simply styled themselves *Canadians*—Canadians—and not French-Canadians. (Applause.)

To demonstrate how the two elements of our population happily mingled together, let us remember that under the first Parliament of the Constitution in 1791, a large number of French constituencies returned English-speaking members to the House of Assembly. In the cities, the two elements of the population met in society and in the country parts the English families which settled there received every mark of consideration from the people around them.

If, later on, national feuds broke out in Quebec, they were due to the constitution, which placed the power in the hands of a set of men altogether devoted to the Executive and excluding the remainder from all share in the administration of public affairs. This state of things lasted for forty years, in spite of the strong protest of the Canadians who, year after year, exposed their grievances to the home Government. Suppose that to-day the Governor would so arrange matters that the same men, the same party, would always be in office. What would take place? It is needless to dilate on this question, because Upper Canada suffered also from the vice of a like constitution, though much less, for the question there was not mixed up with religious and national feelings. It is well, however, to refer briefly to the political troubles of the times, because they have been used as an argument against Lower Canada, to prove the want of loyalty of its population. It will not also be out of place in this connection to draw attention to the fact that when the trouble culminated in open rebellion, a number of English-speaking Canadians sided with the French, the leaders in the two principal engagements being English-speaking, Brown and Nelson.

When the new Constitution was given to Lower Canada removing the cause for friction and giving fair play to all, both populations co-operated in a most friendly manner to bring about the best results from British institutions. What influence had each element on the other? This is one of those interrogations to which it is not easy to give a definite answer. In another order of things, when a man and a woman enter into the bonds of marriage it is almost sure that a certain influence exerted will modify the character, the temper of both contracting parties, sometimes for good and sometimes for worse. It will occur to many that in this alliance it is the influence of the better half that prevails. But in the matter which occupies us just now it is perhaps more difficult to limit the field of influence. I can only answer for my people. It seems to me that the ideas of the French-Canadians have been modified by contact with their English friends. For example: It is a fact that in business matters the French-Canadians will get along as well if not better with the English than with Old Country Frenchmen. It cannot be denied also that the French-Canadian is better adapted to self-government than his cousin across the sea, and that he has always shown a disposition to work harmoniously with his neighbors of different origins.

How far you have been affected by French influence it is hard to say, because the population of Ontario has not had the same intercourse with the French as the English of Lower Canada have had. If this influence has had no effect on you, it may still be pointed out that public men from this Province modified their opinion of French-Canadians after they had become better acquainted with them. The French and English-speaking people of Quebec get along remarkably well together and the French of Quebec could, if they ever needed it, find in their English-speaking fellow citizens men prepared to defend them upon all occasions.

We have all heard a great deal of the Church in Quebec. I am quoting from Parkman to enable me to state my views frankly in that important phase of Quebec's national life:—

"With the Peace of Paris ended the checkered story of New France: a story which would have been a history of faults of constitution if the bigotry and folly of rulers had not dwarfed it to an episode. Yet it is a noteworthy one in both its lights and shadows; in the disinterested zeal of the founders of Quebec; the self-devotion of the early missionary martyrs and the daring enterprise of explorers, in the spiritual and temporal vassalage from which the only escape was to the savagery of the wilderness; and in the swarming corruptions which were the natural result of an attempt to rule by the absolute hand of a master beyond the Atlantic, a people bereft of every vestige of civil liberty. Civil liberty was given them by the British sword; but the conquerors left their religious system untouched and through it they have imposed upon themselves a weight of ecclesiastical tutelage that finds few equals in the most Catholic countries of Europe."

I agree with much that Parkman says, with the single exception of his views on Quebec's religous system, in which he was amiss in his judgment probably as a result of his imperfect knowledge.

It must be remembered that from the birth of the French colonies in America, the priest had at all times been the counsellor, friend and adviser of the poor man. Often the priest stood between the poor man and the seigneur and prevented many injustices and oftentimes obtained redress. In the early days and at all times in fact, the priest was virtually the chief of the flock. It was he who baptized the child, wedded the young people, advised and comforted all classes, and stood by the grave of the departed after offering the prayers of the Church for their souls.

When France abandoned Canada all the leading classes, civil and military, returned to the Old Country. With the farmer, the pioneer, there remained only the priest, faithful to his mission to the last. After the week's laborious and painful task was ended the Church was the rallying place where the people found consolation and advice.

The priest took charge of the education of the children. The colony was practically a colony of orphans torn from its parent. What was to become of the 60,000 people which France had abandoned? The priest

rst induced all to bow to the decree of Providence which the gallant effort f generations had been powerless to avert. He advised and succeeded ı inducing the French-Canadians to at once become British subjects. The astoral letters of the Bishops of Quebec at that time are monuments of isdom and good sense. The people were well advised from the very art. Then, when the English colonies took up arms against England, hen Montreal was in the hands of an American army and Quebec was eing assailed by the troops of the American commonwealth, the Roman atholic clergy of Canada stood by England and induced the French-Canaans to do likewise. (Applause.) This action in those critical days probly prevented the entire continent from passing under the sway of the Stars and Stripes."

The priest established schools, founded colleges and universities and oduced the long galaxy of remarkable men which Quebec has given anada. These were the men who helped to secure for Canadians generly the splendid constitutional regime which we now have. When the rench-Canadians in 1837, driven to exasperation by the injustces of the amily Compact and the office holders, who trampled under foot the eleentary principles of the British Constitution, took up arms, not against ngland, but against its representatives, the clergy were active in advisg the people to trust to constitutional methods.

In more peaceful times, the clergy, in the words ot Lord Dufferin, ıve become "the best moral agency in the world."

Therefore the impression which prevails in many places that the atholic Church has been the bane of Quebec is wrong. It has helped in e spiritual and moral upbuilding of the people and made of the Frenchnadian "habitant" one of the most industrious, peaceable, law-abiding en in the world. The growth of the population from 60,000 at the time the cession of two millions in a century and a half is unsurpassed in the orld's history, and speaks volumes for the teachings and morality inculted to the people of Quebec by their Church. (Applause.) The clergy ve built up in Quebec, all circumstances considered, a community which ll find few equals. For, again, remember that French-Canadians have ceived no help from France for a century and a half; no immigration has vaded their Province. What they have they owe to themselves alone d to the systems, religious and political, under which they live. We ve large churches in Quebec, it is true, but the bulk of the people are of e one faith. But for the Church in Quebec the French-Canadians would ve long since ceased to exist as a distinct body; they would have been similated with other races and would have lost both their faith and their ıguage.

Now, let me come to the French-Canadian of to-day. The Canadian French origin of to-day resembles very much his fathers. He is a jovial aracter, fond of enjoyment; of a roving character, he still overruns the ntinent, and there are few places where he is not to be found. It is

said of him, and very truly, that while he has inherited the faults and good traits of his ancestors, he has been modified by time and circumstances. But he still loves to sing the old songs of Normandy and Brittany. Colonel Strange, during the North-West expedition, 1885, said that the French-Canadian volunteers of the 65th Battalion dragged the cannon through the muskegs and swamps singing "A la claire fontaine" and "Vive la Canadienne." (Applause.) The military instinct still lives in him. The spirit of the three hundred heroes of Chateauguay is as strong to-day as it was then, and at Paardeberg, and other places in South Africa, the French-Canadian volunteer did his duty as a man. (Applause.)

Since the days of Lafontaine and Baldwin, there has been a constant aim, I believe, with the majority of both French and English-speaking Canadians, to bring about a permanent understanding for the good of this country. In Quebec we look upon Lafontaine and Baldwin as the veritable founders of responsible and constitutional government in Canada. We think it was due to their patriotic endeavors and good work that the union of the Canadas was made possible and profitable. Large numbers of French-Canadians looked upon Confederation with fear and trembling lest it might prove to be the grave of their nationality. Such has not been the case.

If the French-Canadian is not as keen and successful in business matters, largely owing to want of capital, and connections in Europe, such as the English-speaking Canadians have had, and still have, he has not been a laggard in the race and has been to some extent a success in the political field. (Applause.)

It is now a matter beyond dispute and of history, that from the cession up to Confederation, and even for some years after, there was a large party in Canada who believed, and in fact were satisfied that it was only a question of time for the Canadians of French origin, when they would be swamped by the British races. That was an idle dream, but quite explicable and natural at that time. The part played by Lafontaine and Cartier, to mention only two, was such as to save their French compatriots from what in the Union, and in Confederation was predicted would be, their end as a separate and distinct element of the Canadian people. The crisis has now been passed, and though Canadians speaking the French language may never hope to be in the majority, unless they succeed in inducing more of their English-speaking compatriots to learn and speak French—(laughter)—as they themselves learn and speak English—(applause)—it is tolerably certain that as long as French continues to be spoken, it will be the dialect of a large number of Canadians. This is no misfortune. I am sure that a man is better equipped who speaks two languages than the person who only speaks one. (Hear, hear.) Of course necessity is a great factor in this case. We like to learn and speak English because it is a beautiful and useful language, and it is a compliment to the English-speaking Canadians to be able to speak their language; but a man

ho has once learnt the language of France will never give it up if he a good judge of language. (Laughter and applause.)

It is no menace, and no danger to Canada, for her people to speak vo languages; it only proves that they know more than those who peak only one. (Applause.) It would be a great folly to imagine for ne moment that the Canadian speaking French is less attached to this ountry, or less loyal to its institutions and the flag which protects them. he Swiss republic has existed for centuries with more than one lanuage. French-Canadians have no other country but Canada—(cheers) -there is no old country for them in the sense that it is employed by any English-speaking Canadians. This "Canada of Ours" is their nly country. You will not find one French-Canadian in a thousand ho has ever been in France, or who ever dreams of going there, or ho has any relative or connection whatever in that country. His whole oul and heart is in Canada; his fathers sleep in the bosom of this coun-y, and it is here that he in turn will find his last resting place.

It is amusing to see how little many people on this continent and eyond it know of the French-Canadian people and their aspirations, nd the conditions prevailing among them. The sum of nonsense which as been published concerning them is simply indescribable. We have eard of their dreaming of a French republic on the banks of the St. awrence, and of Menier, the Chocolate King, acquiring Anticosti for the urpose of fortifying it and swamping the English fleet. No such idle nd silly dreams haunt the French-Canadian habitant. He is peaceble, w abiding; he marries young with the girl of his choice, and has a nall opinion of himself if he cannot bring up a dozen children—(laugh-r)—and claim the 100 acres of land which the Province allows him for velve living children. This law, owing to the large number of appli-nts, was repealed last year. (Loud laughter.) There is no race suide in Quebec.

The French-Canadian works hard and will strive and prosper where e best immigrant from Europe will starve. He will cut down a home r himself and his wife and children in the forest, and stands to-day ithout a peer in this or an other country as a colonizer, and a pioneer in e roughest lands in America. (Hear, hear.) He knows that his great-reat-great-grandfather came from France, and that is all; he knows that e France of Madame de Pompadour and Louis XV. handed him over ody and soul to the English in spite of the fact that the last battle etween French and British troops fought on the St. Lawrence, at Ste. oye, was a French victory, and that if he is alive to-day he owes it to od, to himself, and to the liberty and freedom which he found under e British flag. (Applause.) He remembers that in 1776 and 1812 the rench-Canadian shouldered his musket and helped to save the British ag to this country and kept the Yankee within his boundaries. He members also that the English office-holders who were sent out from

England did their best for a time to prevent him from enjoying the liberty and rights which he was entitled to as a British subject, and that his people had to fire a few shots in '37-'38 at St. Denis, St. Charles and St. Eustache, which shots hastened the advent of responsible government in this country. He is a Roman Catholic at heart, attached to his religion, as having been handed down to him from time immemorial; but he respects all other creeds. He is aware that but for the action and work and influence of the clergy, his existence would be a thing of the past. He sees no reason why he should not be free to speak French if he wishes to, and to go to the Church of his choice. In a word, he is a good citizen of Canada; Canada will never have any better, but he wants to be left in peace. The first people to ask the severance of the tie which binds us to Great Britain will not be the French-Canadians. (Applause.) When Canada needs the habitant, she will find him, and those who have tried him say that he is a good man—they all say so, without any exception.

By natural increase, the French-Canadian has always been at home in Quebec, but he is now fast becoming a citizen of Ontario. He is now a factor in Eastern Ontario and will be in Northern Ontario in another generation. In the Maritime Provinces some of the descendants of the Acadians, banished to the winds by the cruel tragedy of Grand Pré, have returned, and are increasng rapidly. These are all good citizens of Canada. The English people of Ontario have no reason to fear them; they are working for no other country but Canada. The million of Canadians of French origin now in the United States are friendly allies of this country. Of late years, the French-Canadian has made great progress in all the walks of life, and feels easily in the vanguard with his fellow-countrymen of other origins. He has seen his kinsmen play brilliant parts upon the political stage and shed lustre upon public life; one of his countrymen in religious life has been raised to the high position of a Cardinal of the Church; others perform good service in all walks of life; Laval University, the first Roman Catholic university to receive a charter from a British Sovereign since the Reformation, stands second to none, and is extending her work all through French-speaking Canada; his newspaper press has made immense strides—some of his daily papers exceeding the circulation of any English paper in Canada; two of his litterateurs have been crowned by the French Academy. Very many of the young medical men pass through the medical schools of France and England before settling down to practice; in arts and sciences he fairly holds his own, and in literature he ranks with his English-speaking compatriots; his Ecole Polytechnique is turning out engineers who are to be found all over the land; and Captain Bernier, full of adventurous spirit of the old times, is dying for an opportunity of reaching the North Pole —(applause)—his clergy still have the missionary spirit; and the French-Canadian priest and the French-Canadian nun are to be found in the

borders of the Arctic Ocean. In military matters, he has turned out soldiers like De Salaberry and Sir Percy Girouard, and many others who covered themselves with glory, and recruited in his ranks volunteers, who, whether in the muskegs of the North-West or on the veldt of South Africa, were able and did, while fulfilling their duties manfully, sing the old songs of French Canada and "La Belle France," and to die for England's meteor flag, which has become his flag. Illiteracy is fast becoming a thing of the past in Quebec, and the elementary school is to be found in the remotest districts.

On the whole, the Canadian is satisfied with his fate; he celebrates yearly the feast of St. Jean Baptiste, his patron saint, but his emblem is the Maple Leaf of Canada. Among his national hymns is "Vive la Canadienne," in which he exalts the beauty and virtue of the Canadian woman. Never having known or seen the vanished white flag of old France, he at times, on holidays, flies to the breeze the tri-color of France, but that flag he first saw displayed in the streets of Montreal in honor of British troop at the time of the Crimean war, when France and England stood shoulder to shoulder, and he looks upon it as the flag of an ally, reminding him of the days when French and British fought and died together, at Alma, Redan, Inkerman and Sebastopol. (Applause.) And, thanks to our noble King, France and England are friends to-day. (Loud applause.)

When England's soldiers and England's sailors come to and leave Canada, there is no place more than in the old Rock City of Quebec where they receive a warmer welcome or a more friendly God-speed. It is in Quebec that the dissensions of the past have been forgotten and buried, and that monuments stand erected jointly to the memory of the defeated French and the victorious English. It is there that the last stand for England's flag has been made against American invaders and where it may be made again. It is there that thousands of French-Canadians cheered to the echo the parting "Sardinian" loaded down with the flower of Canadian youth going to fight and die for England and the Empire in South Africa. The French-Canadian wants to do his share for Canada, to make of it a nation worthy of the nations from which it sprang. He asks and expects his countrymen of this great Province of Ontario to look upon him as a brother and not as an alien, to remember all that is elevating in the past, and to bury all dissensions and discords. (Applause.)

My time has about expired, Mr. Chairman. (Voices: "Go on.") I will conclude by merely giving you an expression from a man for whom I always had the greatest respect. I refer to the late Reverend Principal Grant. (Applause.) He concluded an introductory article on Canada, a text-book issued by the Dominion Government, in the following words:—

"To the political and historical students probably the chief interest of Canada lies in the existence side by side of the civilizations of different

types, French-speaking Quebec with its racial peculiarities, its people devotedly attached to their own language, laws and literature, and their own religious traditions and forms, wedged in between the English-speaking Maritime Provinces on the one side and by Ontario and the great west on the other.

"Will gradual fusion take place between these widely scattered elements and a nation be formed combining the best qualities of both as Norman, Saxon and Cymri fused in England, Norsemen and Celt in Scotland, and equally composite elements in Ireland? Oracles gloomily predict political strife, ending some day in open conflict, and probably with not a few of these the wish is father to the thought; but careful students of our actual development during the last fifty years—the period in which both races have worked together harmoniously in Provincial and Federal affairs, since their emancipation from the Colonial Office—take a different view. They entertain no doubts concerning our future. The interaction of the two elements gives distinctive color to our national life. To despair of a peaceful solution of the problem on a continent where English speech and constitutional forms are so overwhelming predominant argues astonishing lack of faith in our ideals and moral forces, and in the far-reaching result of free institutions."

These were the views of one of the most enlightened, broad-minded and patriotic of Canadians. These views, I am confident, are shared by us all. They should be the views of all Canadians no matter the stock from which they sprang. We have a mission to fulfil. Clubs such as yours can do an immense lot of good in this patriotic work. Let the past bury its dead. We are all proud of the races from which we came; we are the sons of the first nations of the world. We have for a mission to carry into effect the greatest triumphs of each; Britain in commerce, navigation, popular government, civil and religious liberty; France in literature, arts and sciences. We stand as a band of brothers prepared to live and die for this country. (Applause.) Canada is destined to become a great nation. Our children's children will be the citizens of a powerful commonwealth extending from ocean to ocean, forming one grand fatherland, peopled by millions upon millions of free people recruited from all parts of the world. The twentieth century will witness the advance of Canada in all paths of progress. The infant of yesterday will be the giant of to-morrow. (Applause.)

Let us be worthy citizens of this country and let us build upon the solid rock of Christianity, charity, and mutual forbearance. Let us live down bigotry, crush down prejudice and illumine the path with the Eternal light which never grows dim, of justice and truth. Let each one of us do what in him lies, to attain this great goal and these high ideals. Let us do what is right. May the day have come at last when a Canadian may feel at home in any part of this country, when provincialism exists merely for purposes of government, and its shade has departed for ever in the minds of all true men.

Let the rising generations be better if possible than were those of the past in this respect. Let the word go forward that the Canadians are one for civil and religious liberty in its broadest and truest sense. Let this be the land of freedom in its truest sense. Let us learn the great lesson of the past, taught us in the blood of our kindred. Let us show the world that we are worthy of the past and prepared for the present; the future will take care of itself. (Applause.)

It is related that Montcalm on his death-bed, after the great duel of the Plains of Abraham, and when Wolfe's soul had departed to its Maker, sent the following note to Brigadier Townsend, then in command of the British :—

"Sir,—The humanity of the British sets my mind at peace concerning the fate of the French prisoners, and the Canadians. Feel towards them as they have caused me to feel. Do not let them perceive that they have changed masters. Be their protector as I have been their father."

The wish of the dying hero was respected. The humanity of England was equal to the undertaking, and to-day her name stands high in the annals of the world and nowhere more so than in this country and on this continent, where her lessons have been learnt, where her spirit of the government of man will live for ever. Here true British liberty lives! Here exist liberty of worship and freedom of speech; here the memory of the soldier who died for his country, no matter the flag or the uniform, sleeps the eternal sleep, respected and envied by all; here are known and honored the citizens who struggled and fought for liberty; here true loyalty to the principles of right an dtruth prevail, that Canadians of generations yet unborn may never forget the past; that the men of to-day and the men of to-morrow may be worthy links between the past and the future, is, I am sure, the fond hope of us all.

In that work the Canadian Club can do an immense lot of good. The example was started from Ontario, was started, I believe, from Hamilton, and from Toronto is now coming into Quebec. We have in Ottawa on the borders of Quebec and in Montreal magnificent clubs such as yours, recruited among the reputable, among the intelligent men of those cities. And, gentlemen, the work which you have commenced is a patriotic work.

You have honored me immensely by asking me to be with you to-day and giving me an opportunity of saying a few words in this disconnected fashion; but I can assure you that it is highly appreciated, and that my fondest wish for your club is that it may continue in the good work which you have so well commenced. (Loud cheers.)