

appears among the French-Canadian phalanx, but in compensation we find a French-Canadian name in the list of those who voted for that inexcusable denial of a right which we were to purchase so dearly. It is not my desire, Mr. SPEAKER, to make any comments on this division, but I cannot refrain from observing that it demonstrates that on every occasion we have had to struggle against the encroachments and antagonism of the English element in Canada. Yet there was no cessation in the demand for the voting of the supplies so long as it was not obtained, and it is a remarkable fact that during the whole time that the French-Canadians were in a majority in our country. England systematically refused us our most just demands and the control of the general administration. Still more, the most arbitrary acts were thrust upon us by the Mother Country, aided in every way, moreover, by colonial English fanaticism, which lost no opportunity of turning its well-known exclusiveness to our disadvantage. But so soon as their countrymen exceeded us in number, so soon as the English element obtained a preponderance in the House of Assembly by means of the union of 1840, the English authorities granted us all the political rights for which we had asked in vain for a century. They perfectly well knew that those rights would be controlled, and in case of need utilised against us by an essentially hostile representative majority. But, thanks to the patriotism of our men of that day, we succeeded in baffling the schemes of the British Government. Up to the union those men had had to keep up a constant struggle, marked by a degree of heroism worthy of the cause which they served, against the English autocracy, which was banded together against our countrymen. We, their descendants, are ready to recommence the same struggle with the same energy, to maintain our rights so dearly purchased, and to preserve the inheritance which we have received and which it is our wish to transmit intact to the children of the soil. (Hear, hear.) Let us now see what was the condition of the liberty of the press and of the liberty of the subject at this gloomy period of our parliamentary history. The *Canadien* having dared to ask for responsible government, and Mr. BÉDARD having obtained in the House a majority of twenty-one against nine in favor of the voting of the supplies, the Executive Council resolved at any cost to injure the influence of the *Canadien*, and to paralyze the efforts

of the Canadian leaders. It kept a watch on the *Canadien* to find grounds of accusation, and on the deposition of two individuals, caused the printing office to be seized by a squad of soldiers, its contents to be conveyed to the vaults of the court, and Mr. BÉDARD to be imprisoned on a charge of treasonable practices. And this act of tyranny was grounded on the fact that these political martyrs had had the courage to demand for Canada the right of voting the supplies! The *Canadien* gave an account of this atrocious imprisonment in the following paragraph:—

The infamous conduct of the Council did not end here. The latter, with the view of striking terror into the great national party, caused Messrs. LAFORCE, PAPINEAU (of Chambly), CORREIL, TACHÉREAU and BLANCHET to be imprisoned.

Thus, Mr. SPEAKER, at this period a representative of the people was cast into prison for having asked for the granting of a right which was unjustly withheld, and to crown the act of tyranny, he was left to rot in his cell for fourteen months, and was refused a trial before the courts in which he could have easily justified himself, and proved that he had acted in a constitutional manner. I cannot pass over this page of our parliamentary history without quoting it:—

The leaders, however, who had been basely imprisoned, did not stoop before the storm. Mr. BÉDARD, from the depths of his cell, braved the fury of the enemies of his country; his great soul remained calm and undisturbed, and he did not give way to despair. Proud of his rights and confident of the justice of his cause, he in vain demanded from his persecutors a justification of their conduct. The ears of his jailers were deaf to his demand, and refusing the liberty which they wished to grant him, he even insisted on being brought to trial. The new elections caused no change in the national representation. The Governor, in his speech, made no allusion to the severe measures which he had taken with respect to Mr. BÉDARD and his companions, and the session passed over without the noble prisoner having been liberated. It was not until after a captivity of thirteen months, and after having contracted a mortal disease, that this great man left the prison to go and rejoin a beloved family, who were deprived of their all and who were indebted for their means of existence to the honorable generosity of the citizens of Quebec.

Notwithstanding these crying injustices, Mr. BÉDARD did not complain; he considered that it was not too high a price to pay for the liberties of the people, and that a few months' imprisonment was a mere nothing in view of