

Royal, where nobody was found (all the people being in the fields, two leagues away), and in less than two hours all the houses, together with the fort, were reduced to ashes.

Well, Mr. SPEAKER, this scene of devastation and vandalism on our continent, which at that period contained hardly a thousand white inhabitants, gives the clue to all the events which followed from that date up to the conquest of Canada by the English. This fact is a corroboration of the principle that provides that the stronger nation shall oppress the weaker, unless by special circumstances the one is protected against the other. This is the proof that the sectional equality secured by the system of government which we now possess has alone been effective in Canada to enable different nationalities to live together on terms of equality, and to labor successfully for the advancement of the common prosperity. (Hear, hear.) But the strife which began in 1613, between France and England, became more deadly after a century and a half of occupation; it spread along the whole frontier of New France. At the instigation of the rival race, Indian tribes fell upon all the French settlements in the country, and an incessant and vindictive war was kept up with the sole object of driving the French off the continent. We know at the present day what the result of that contest was. We are told that we have no reason to complain of the system of government which we now have. That is true. But if we have that government it is because, ever since the conquest, the remnant of the French nation which remained in the land have striven bravely to obtain it. Had it not been for the American revolution, we too would have had our large share of suffering and humiliation, similar to that which the Acadians were made to undergo. The treatment to which they were subjected by England is an example of what might have happened to us, but for our number, and, subsequently, but for the vicinity to us of the American Republic. There was in Acadia a nucleus of French people, who lived peaceably and happily, and who had submitted to English domination without a murmur; and yet, because they were weak and had no longer the arm of France to protect them, they were transported, like negroes on the coast of Africa, by philanthropic England. This is an important historical fact which must not be forgotten, and the details of which it is well to set before the eyes of our population, at a time when the

English element is pursuing, with a persistence worthy of a better cause, the aggressive and encroaching policy concealed under the scheme of Confederation which is submitted to us. The hon. member for South Lanark (Mr. MORRIS) told us the other day that we ought to thank England, and be most grateful to her for the system of government which we received from her. But to whom do we owe that system? Do we owe it to the liberality of England? Did we not obtain our political rights only at the time when she could no longer refuse them to us with safety? No, Mr. SPEAKER, our gratitude and our thanks are only due to those fellow-countrymen of ours who at all times bravely strove to obtain them. When we see French colonies which still groan under the English colonial system, and which complain to Europe of the treatment to which they are subjected, the conclusion must be come to that we owe nothing to England, but that on the contrary we owe all to those who, after an age of strife, obtained for us that governmental reform which we enjoy. In order that our people may form a correct opinion of that liberality which is so highly vaunted to us, allow me here, Mr. SPEAKER, to quote a few pages of the history of the Acadian people:—

The war of 1774 began their misfortunes; that of the seven years completed its total ruin. For some time the English agents acted with the greatest severity; the courts, by the most flagrant violation of the law, by systematic denial of justice, had become to the poor inhabitants an object at once of terror and of hatred. The most subordinate official insisted on obedience to his will. "If you do not supply wood to my troops," said a certain Captain MURRAY, "I will tear down your houses and use them for fuel." "If you will not take the oath of fidelity," added Governor Hopson, "I will turn my cannon against your villages." Nothing could induce these honorable men to do an act against which their consciences exclaimed, and which, in the opinion of many people, England had no right to demand from them. "The Acadians," observes Mr. HALIBURTON, "were not British subjects, as they had not taken the oath of allegiance, and they could not, therefore, be considered rebels; nor were they to be looked upon as prisoners of war, nor to be sent to France, as for nearly half a century they had been allowed to retain their possessions, on the simple condition of remaining neutral." But many schemers and adventurers looked at their fine farms with an envious eye. What fine inheritances, and, consequently, what a bait! It was not difficult for them to find political reasons to justify the expulsion of the Acadians. By far the