

conflicts of opinion which its discussion will set forth, the principles of toleration and equal rights which should be sanctioned thereby.

It has been stated that 'Experience is a physician called in too late'; and I may not be wrong in thinking that the experience acquired of late years in the province of Manitoba has been of that kind. The young men of my generation, undoubtedly, have not wholly realized the painful ordeal which our country was made to undergo at a time when the cry of race and religion prevented the quiet discussion of the question of separate schools and of the use of the French language. We were not in the heat of that battle, wherein galling epithets and hateful words were most dangerous missiles; we did not smell the powder of that fanatical warfare. But its rumblings reached our ears; we heard its echo. It may be that owing to our lack of experience, we have taken a somewhat exaggerated view of the situation; but we could not help trembling at the sight of the turmoil into which that bitter struggle of uncompromising principles might have led our country, made up of various elements, had not the present government had the happy thought of negotiating a truce which will be some day final peace, let us hope. That result was effected, on the one hand, through the advice given to the Catholic minority from a quarter familiar to them, Rome, and, on the other hand, through the gentle promptings of diplomacy, whereby the Protestant majority were induced to take a stand making concessions easier all the time.

The young men of my age are witnesses to-day, as it were, of the aftermath only of the storm; but that hurricane of prejudice has left on its train enough ruins, it has hurled too violently one against the others the sons of beautiful France and those of noble England, born on Canadian soil to live side by side, it has caused too much pain, brought about too many quarrels; in a word, it has done too much harm to the Canadian nation for us not to concern ourselves with its possible recurrence. I am confident that the present government, in constituting these new provinces of the Dominion, will foresee all the consequences of the setting in motion of the administrative and legislative machinery which they intend to install, and will thus prevent the crisis, the terrible effects of which have been set forth by recent events.

But if I consider from another standpoint the conferring of provincial autonomy on the Territories, I cannot but rejoice at the thought of that fine page we are about to add to the history of Canada.

The entrance of a new province into the fold of the Dominion is always greeted with a hearty welcome. If that great and beautiful Northwest has reached manhood, so to speak, if it is mature for the grave function of self government, let, in the first place, all the other provinces offer their warmest

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congratulations, and let the country as a whole rejoice as well. For the birth of a new province within the Dominion is not merely an indication of our prosperity, is not only a vindication of the manner in which public affairs have been managed since 1896. It is, besides, a step forward, made by Canada, and above all it is the certain pledge that our dream of becoming a great nation will soon be carried out. The gap which almost separates the extreme west from the east of Canada is thereby filled; our country becomes almost homogeneous and one stride more is taken in our country's noble and rapid progress towards its great destiny.

Sir, if I may be allowed to express a hope, let it be this: when self government will have been conferred on western Canada, self government which we love so much because it is akin to liberty, when the majority of that country will be left to manage its affairs, may they turn their eyes towards the province, one of whose humble representatives I am here, and whence so many courageous missionaries have gone to these distant lands; may they not close their eyes to the examples of toleration and good will which our legislators give in their dealings with the minority; may the breezes from our mountains when gently passing over the wheat fields of Assiniboia and Alberta bring with them their perfume of kindness and generosity.

If I feel at ease in thus greeting these provinces whose advent is announced in the speech from the Throne, it is because I recall the measures taken beforehand by the government on their behalf. The older provinces have extended a helping hand to that younger sister and to ensure her growth and normal development, the construction of a great railway is now ensured.

Now, Sir, it is not my intention to deal at any length with the advantages offered by the Grand Trunk Pacific scheme. All that could be said on that subject has, or at any rate, should have been said, and to agree with me, one need only recall the innumerable speeches delivered in the course of the recent electoral contest. If, nevertheless, I make a passing reference to this gigantic undertaking, if I recall the dream of general prosperity which its carrying out will suggest for the country as a whole, if I corroborate the gratitude of my western brethren with my own humble congratulations, it is because I already can see the heavy wheat trains steaming towards my native city, crossing the river at Quebec, over that marvellous bridge, whose construction was, in my childhood, so often represented to me as impossible; and in the completion of that bridge I recognize the reward due to the constant efforts, to the unrelenting, unceasing labour of which I was the witness in my father's home. And should such words seem presumptuous, please be indulgent towards a son who is the witness