

tion from the control of the majority, the rights of the minority will not be safe in either section of the province, if you distrust the action of the majority. It is our duty, Sir, to see that a question which affects us so dearly as the education of our children—a question which has before now created no little excitement in Upper Canada—shall not be withdrawn from the management of the local legislature. We ought not to deprive them of a power which they will want to exercise, just because they are deprived of it, and provoke a desire on their part to alter the system. You may rely upon it other religious bodies will be sure to protest against any particular creed having special rights, or an exclusive monopoly of certain privileges, whatever they may be. I should be astonished if any one in this House would say, either to the Protestant minority in Lower Canada or to the Roman Catholic minority in Upper Canada: "You are not to trust to the justice of the majority." Have they ever known a country where the majority did not control affairs and where the minority had not to submit?

And yet we are asked to-day to prevent the majority in Manitoba controlling the affairs of that province, although we have never known a civilized country where it was not the case that the majority controlled and the minority submitted. He goes on:

Does not the majority rule and the minority submit in England and in France? I have never heard of any case where this was not the case. The minority is safe against undue encroachment on its rights, and I am willing to trust to the sense of justice of the majority in Upper Canada to preserve the religious and educational liberties of the Roman Catholics of Upper Canada. I am now getting some what advanced in years, and I am the more anxious to put my opinions on record, because before long I shall have the satisfaction of saying, though perhaps not on the floor of this House, that I protested against resolutions intended to prevent the free expression of opinion by the majority of the people of Upper Canada, and the exercise of a power which ought to be entrusted to them.

We can see to-day, in the light of experience, the foresight and intelligence of the late John Sandfield Macdonald in the forecasting what might be the result if the rights of the majority in a province were taken away, and they were not allowed to exercise the rights that belong to every civilized country. He went on to move a resolution as follows:—

That the following words be added to the original motion:—

"And that it be an instruction to the said committee to consider whether any constitutional restriction which shall exclude from the local legislature of Upper Canada the entire control and direction of education, subject only to the approval or disapproval of the general Parliament, is not calculated to create widespread dissatisfaction, and tend to foster and create jealousy and strife between the various religious bodies in that section of the province."

He goes on to say:

If hon. gentlemen think they are going to silence the bitter feelings which have been en-

gendered in Upper Canada in consequence of the attempt to make permanent a certain system of education, they are much mistaken; and I desire to have the expression of the opinion of the members of this House on the subject, whether they think that the restriction in the proposed constitution I have mentioned is calculated to bring about harmony, and whether it is not better to let the Catholics of Upper Canada and the Protestants of Lower Canada protect themselves, or rather trust for protection to the sense of justice of their fellow-subjects.

An hon. gentleman who opposed that motion said:

Though I am against the separate school system, I am willing to accept this confederation, even though it perpetuates a small number of separate schools. Under the present legislative union we are powerless in any movement for the abrogation of the separate system; it is even very doubtful if we could resist the demands for its extension. We will not be in any worse position under the new system, and in one respect we will have a decided advantage, in that no further change can be made by the separate school advocates. We will thus substitute certainty for uncertainty. I deeply regret that the hon. member should have thought it necessary for any purpose to move this resolution.

He did not contemplate any further changes, but he was willing to accept what was then in existence in Upper and Lower Canada.

Mr. DEVLIN. Who held that language?

Mr. SPROULE. It was Mr. A. Mackenzie.

Mr. DEVLIN. The late Hon. Alexander Mackenzie?

Mr. SPROULE. Yes, I think so. Now, I think I have made clear two things. The first is that it was never contemplated at confederation to compel every province that came into the union to accept separate schools, but only to accept the solemn compact made between Upper and Lower Canada, and to act on the understanding that that compact should be carried out. Acting on that understanding, in two or three local elections in the province of Ontario in which the school question engaged a great deal of attention, I steadily refused to say one word against separate schools in Upper or Lower Canada, because I considered that under the solemn compact made at confederation, the rights enjoyed by the minorities in the two provinces should be maintained. But I held that it was never contemplated, when confederation was brought about, that similar rights should be extended to every province that came into the union, and I am justified in that belief by the resolutions that were moved at that time. Some say that we are bound not only to give separate schools to every province that comes into the union, but after it comes in, and it engrafs on its statutes some privilege in regard to schools that may or not be justifiable, that privilege must remain there for ever. I say there is nothing in the