

# EXTRACTS

FROM

## DEBATES ON CONFEDERATION.

The following are Extracts from the Debates on the Confederation Resolutions, 1864 :—

Hon. Mr. Brown said :—

“I have always opposed, and continue to oppose, the system of sectarian education, so far as the public chest is concerned. I have never had any hesitation on that point. . . . But while in the conference and elsewhere I have always maintained this view, and always give my vote against sectarian Public Schools, I am bound to admit, as I have always admitted, that the sectarian system, carried to the limited extent it has yet been in Upper Canada, and confined as it chiefly is to cities and towns, has not yet been a very great practical injury. . . . Now it is known to every honorable member of this House that an Act was passed in 1863 as a final settlement of this sectarian controversy. I was not in Quebec at the time, but if I had been here I would have voted against that bill, because it extended the facilities for establishing Separate Schools. It had, however, this good feature, that it was accepted by the Roman Catholic authorities and carried through Parliament as a final compromise of the question in Upper Canada. When, therefore, it was proposed that a provision should be inserted in the Confederation scheme to bind that compact of 1863 and declare it a final settlement, so that we should not be compelled, as we have been since 1849, to stand constantly to our arms, awaiting fresh attacks upon our Common School system, the proposition seemed to me one that was not rashly to be rejected. . . . But it was urged that, though this arrangement might, perhaps, be fair as regards Upper Canada, it was not so as regards Lower Canada, for these were matters of which the British population have long complained, and some amendments to the existing School Act were required to secure them equal justice. Well, when this point was raised, gentlemen of all parts in Lower Canada at once expressed themselves prepared to treat it in a frank and conciliatory manner, with a view to removing any injustice that might be shown to exist; and on this understanding the educational clause was adopted by the Conference.

“Mr. T. C. Wallbridge—That destroys the power of the Local Legislatures to legislate upon the subject.

“Mr. Brown—I would like to know how much power the hon. gentleman