

the Protestant minority in Lower Canada. The government had no doubt that that bill would meet the most decided opposition of a large majority from Upper Canada, including that of every member of the government from Upper Canada but himself. (Hear, hear.) Had the Lower Canada bill stood alone, he repeated, there was no sort of doubt a majority would have voted for it; yet when the two bills came up together the government had ascertained also that the majority of Lower Canada would have felt it their duty to their co-religionists to insist that the two bills should pass through the House at the same moment. Then we should have had an unfortunate spectacle of the majority in Lower Canada in a conflict with the majority in Upper Canada just as they were on the eve of separation. The provisions of the bill formed part of the guarantees provided by Confederation, and any laws on this subject in force when Confederation is consummated could not afterwards be altered, and each section would have felt itself suffering under grievances which there was no constitutional method of escaping from. Canada, therefore, instead of starting on a new race of Confederation in peace and harmony, would present to the Lower Provinces an unfortunate spectacle of two houses divided against themselves. Instead of double majority we should have had double minority. The Government, on the whole, considering the deep importance of this question, though with the deepest regret, felt it their duty to say that they were going to abandon this bill, and the minority both in Upper and Lower Canada would be obliged to throw themselves on the generosity of the majority in their respective sections. (Hear, hear.) He hoped this confidence might not be unfounded. He felt sure that the Protestant majority in Upper Canada would show that if they were strong they could be generous. (Hear, hear.) He repeated that it was with the greatest pain that Government, looking to the future prosperity and welfare of the country, felt it to be their duty to take this course. This was a great cause of regret, but it was a still greater cause of regret to himself and colleagues that by adopting this course they would lose the assistance of one of the most able and distinguished members of the government; he referred to the Minister of Finance, who had identified himself with this question and who was looked upon in this House and in Lower Canada as the exponent of the feelings and wishes of the Protestant minority in Lower Canada. But that hon. gentleman felt that his usefulness and influence would be destroyed and that he would have laid himself open to charges of insincerity and with preferring office to the interest and feelings of those for whom he had so zealously fought and labored. (Hear, hear.) He [Mr. Galt] had, therefore, felt it his bounden duty to inform his colleagues that he could not be responsible for the policy of the government on this question, and he presented his resignation to His Excellency, who had been graciously pleased to accept it. This was a matter of most unfeigned regret to the government, and he believed it would be equally a matter of regret to the whole country. But the only consolation they had was this, that in withdrawing from his position none of the ties of personal friendship which had so long existed between Mr. Galt and his colleagues were broken. In the meantime he was happy to inform the House that the government had invited the hon. gentleman [Mr. Galt] to aid and assist them in carrying through the measures which he had so ably mediated in this House, and that he had consented to do so. He [Mr. Jno. A. Macdonald] had further to announce that in consequence of the withdrawal of this bill, the session would be speedily ended, and that it was the intention of His Excellency to prorogue the House on Saturday next.

Hon. Mr. GALT said it had not been without a deep sense of the great responsibility of the step which he had taken that he had resigned his position in the present Government. His hon. friend had explained the position of matters which led to the adoption of this course—which led to his resignation. He (Mr. Galt) was bound in all candor to say that he thought the Government had taken a course which he believed the interests of the country required, but it was one which he could not approve. It was not that he thought the Protestants of Lower Canada would be dealt with unfairly by the Catholic minority, but it was because he had in his place in the House and in the Government taken a certain ground on this question which rendered it impossible for him to be responsible for the policy of the Government on this measure. (Hear, hear.) With regard to the policy which he intended to pursue on this question, he should now have an opportunity of consulting his friends in the country; but he felt assured that the future Parliament of Lower Canada would agree that the interests of the country required Government to urge this question in a deeper consideration of the public welfare. He felt sure the minority of Lower Canada would not be sufferers in this matter. It was no light thing for him to retire from the position he occupied, and the friends with whom he had acted so many years, but there were considerations which he felt must outweigh these. He repeated that he thought Government had taken a proper, wise and patriotic course, even though it had

placed him in this position. He thought that the House must be aware that to have given offense to a large section of the country by their last act in the concluding session of this Parliament would be highly injudicious. It would be highly dangerous to give the Catholic portion of Upper Canada a just cause of complaint to make against the Government. It was only due to his colleagues in Lower Canada to say that they had at least shown no disposition to recede from the pledge which was given at the formation of the Coalition. He was bound to say this in justice to them, and especially to the attorney-General East. Public interests in their opinion compelled the Government to take this course.

MR. S. MACDONALD said the Government had taken a very wise course in arriving at this conclusion. The observations made by former speakers showed the very strong reasons there were for not forcing on a measure calculated to produce very serious difficulties in Upper and Lower Canada. At the conclusion of the debate on the Quebec scheme, he had pointed out the evil of fettering any majority either in Upper or Lower Canada so that they could not interfere with the minority. The observations which he made at that time were not thought of any moment; but the same conclusion had now forced itself on the Government, and he was very glad that out of respect to the feelings of Upper Canada, the declaration of to-day had been obtained from the Government. He claimed that the Protestants of Lower Canada had no reason to feel alarmed. To-day he found the expression of confidence which he (Mr. Sandfield Macdonald) formerly heard repeated by the Atty. Gen. West. It would have been most extraordinary legislation to have placed the minority in such a position that they should not, to some extent, be at the mercy of the majority. He was not afraid but that they would obtain justice in either Province. When the Confederation scheme was consummated, both would stand on equal ground, and he had no doubt justice would be accorded to them, and believing that, he congratulated the gentlemen on the Treasury benches of this House, especially the members from Upper Canada, that their voices had been heard. The prospect of Confederation was much less alarming to him now. He looked upon it as a foregone conclusion; but he had always been glad to do anything to produce harmony between the two sections. Confederation being inevitable, he did not wish to have the responsibility of carrying it through by taking it out of the hands of the gentlemen now on the Treasury benches. It might fail in their hands; he thought it would; and if it failed in others, the failure would be ascribed to their want of faith and sincerity.

MR. CAUCHON regretted extremely the issue of the contest concerning schools. He regretted very much that the country was to lose the services of the Finance Minister. He was ready to vote for the amendments to which the Government pledged themselves in 1864, but the breaking up the whole system and appointing a deputy superintendent he could not accept. It was an insult to his race to embody such extreme distrust in the statute. If these features were removed the bill might have passed.

MR. PORE had reason to be satisfied with the fair play he and British Lower Canadians generally had always received from the present Superintendent of Education, and so far as he was personally concerned, so far as most of the hon. members near him representing the English speaking constituencies were concerned, nay he was sure that so far as the Finance Minister himself acted for himself, they would be satisfied to trust their interests in the future to the French Canadian majority. But that would not satisfy the people at home whom they represented, whose interests they were bound to defend, whose apprehensions, though founded on prejudice, they were bound to consider. Nor would their contentment quiet those agitators of sectional strife, who by appealing to prejudices had awakened an agitation and alarm which nothing but some such measure as that proposed, but now abandoned, could allay. They had wished to settle the matter that in future political existence, it could never become a bone of contention between the two races and creeds. The English speaking people of Canada had felt they had made large concessions on their part. Yielding to a natural feeling of alarm felt by French Canadians, they had voted for a confederate form of government which was distasteful to them, who desired legislative union, and to a dissolution of the union with the British of Upper Canada, which they did unwillingly; and having conceded so much to French Canadians to allay their alarm for the safety of their religion, language and institutions, they felt they had some right to ask in return these lesser concessions, not as perhaps, in the opinion of members themselves, of absolute necessity, but as demanded by the state of public opinion in the position of the country which they represented. It was a matter of sincere regret that this request of theirs should have involved the loss to the country of the services of hon. the member whom they regarded as their representative in the Cabinet.