

but many of them, also, dread it, and would wish to see it amended. As to the people they know nothing about your scheme, and until the time comes when they shall undergo the ordeal of taxes and imposts, they will, I fancy, exhibit the utmost indifference. But let the Confederation be carried out, let the fabulous expenses be commenced connected with the defence of the country, the support of a militia, the creation of a marine, the construction of the Intercolonial Railway and other public works, and, as the proverb says, "Time will tell." Yes, we shall then perceive the disastrous results of this measure, but it will be a little too late. I now come to my second objection to the scheme of Confederation. With your permission I shall treat it on a future occasion.

A CITIZEN.

Quebec, March 6th, 1865.

Well, Mr. SPEAKER, if I am not mistaken, that reverent gentleman, a member of our clergy, seems to be somewhat less convinced than our Ministers and the honorable member for Vaudreuil of the safety of our religious interests, and of our nationality. Are not his expressions sufficiently energetic and significant? But let us now see whether the reverend gentleman has grounds for his alarm, and whether he is not somewhat carried away by his zeal and patriotic anxiety for the welfare of his fellow-countrymen. Let us see whether, on the contrary, he does not appreciate more correctly than our Lower Canada Ministers the position in which we shall be placed by Confederation. I think we shall be enabled to judge from an article which appeared in a late number of the organ of the Honorable President of the Council. The *Toronto Globe* of the 6th March inst.,—a paper which is now one of the principal organs of the present Government—publishes an article, written perhaps by the Honorable President of the Council himself, in which I find the following kindly expression applied to our honored clergy:—

We trust that those well-meaning but mistaken friends of the Common School system of Upper Canada, who have been censuring the educational agreement in the Quebec resolutions, will now see something of its value. Bishop Lysen's bold letter should be a warning to us all how utterly unsafe our schools are under the present Constitution. The Romish Church is ever aggressive—getting to-day concessions with which it professes to be entirely satisfied, only to come back and demand new ones at the first opportunity. (Under our present parliamentary system, it is never safe to say that the Romish bishops in Canada cannot, with a little labor, get all they may ask. Under Confederation, while gladly "crying quits" and leaving them what they now have and can keep in spite of us, we should be

placed in a position to refuse them anything more. But let our present Constitution last five years longer, and the chances are that the new demands of the hierarchy will be conceded.)

If the honorable gentleman is not satisfied now that the fears of the clergy are well founded, I really cannot see how he can possibly be convinced. (Hear, hear.) That honorable member gave us a splendid and perfectly just eulogium of the admirable merits and devotedness of our Lower Canadian clergy—an eulogium which expresses the thought of every man who has any feeling of admiration for deserving merit, wherever it may be found, and whatever may be his own nationality or religion—an eulogium which I endorse with my whole heart. (Hear, hear.) But, Mr. SPEAKER, I am not the less convinced that everything foreshadowed by the extract I have just read from the *Globe* is destined to occur one day, if we adopt the measure now before us. And what is the meaning of the petitions pouring in every day by thousands, why all these crosses affixed to these energetic and patriotic protests—crosses formed by rude hands guided by noble hearts? (Hear, hear.) I will tell you, Mr. SPEAKER, why there are so many crosses; it is because, previous to the union of the Canadas, the Legislative Council was composed of enemies of the Lower Canadians, who refused, for a great number of years, to make even the most paltry grants for our Lower Canada schools. Thanks to this tyrannical proscription, the schools were closed by hundreds, and the children of our people were unable to obtain the benefits of education, of which they would most certainly have availed themselves. Hence it is that the petitions pouring in upon us from all quarters, to protest against the oppression about to be established, are in great part signed with crosses—crosses certainly of equal value with the magnificent signatures of certain honorable members of this House, who have attempted to turn into ridicule the signatures of these petitions. At that period, Mr. SPEAKER, the Canadian clergy were, as they are to-day, the leaders of the education movement, and the British oligarchy did all in its power to contract the limits of their noble work—the education of the children of the soil. (Hear, hear.) But thanks to the constant and energetic protests of patriotic men—thanks to the struggles they maintained for many a long year—struggles which culminated at last in open rebellion against the authority of Great Britain—we gained the liberties we now enjoy. And with reference to the rebellion, I think