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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any other person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE announcement that the negotiations for the entrance of Newfoundland into the Dominion have fallen through, and that the proposed Island delegation will not come to Ottawa, will not occasion either much surprise or much regret, under the circumstances. Different reasons are assigned for the sudden change of purpose. On behalf of the Ottawa authorities it is said that, as from recent communications it appeared that the Newfoundland deputies would not be clothed with any powers to make even a provisional arrangement, and as their duties would, therefore, be confined to merely finding out what inducements the Dominion Government could offer, the Island authorities had been notified that no good purpose could be served by the coming of the deputation. On the other hand the opposition, always strong in the Island, to annexation seems to have shewn redoubled vigour as the time for the setting out of the delegates drew near. No doubt the prospect of international difficulties arising out of the retaliation threatened by the United States materially helped the anti-union agitation. Very likely the Island Government became convinced of the hopelessness of attempting to carry the matter any further at present. The fact is that the movement has from the first lacked the element of spontaneity which is one of the chief conditions of success in such a union. The matter having been broached by the Dominion Government, and the proposition but coolly and coyly received by the Islanders, the business immediately took too much the aspect of an attempted purchase on the one side, and a determination to be guided wholly by the amount of the immediate cash price offered on the other. The conviction is strong in many Canadian minds that there is yet much to be done before the union of the present members of the Confederation can be considered secure, and the work of consolidation complete. When that point shall have been reached, and the centrifugal forces now unhappily at work fully overcome, the outlying colony will not long be able to resist the operation of a natural and legitimate attraction.

"VESTED rights is a relative term in the economy of a nation; sooner or later we shall come to see that it is the right of the vast majority of our people, and necessary to harmony and progress, that our school system be

raised above subserviency to any party, religious or political. The attainment of that end will involve the abolition of the Separate Schools." So replies the *Evangelical Churchman* to our reminder, a week or two since, that Separate Schools are secured to the Roman Catholics by the Act of Confederation. If this rejoinder means anything, it must mean that sooner or later the Protestant majority in the Dominion will break faith with the Catholic minority. Is not this rather questionable ground for a religious newspaper to take? "Harmony and progress" are desirable ends, but surely honour and truth are of still higher obligation. If it is praiseworthy in a man that when he "swareth to his own hurt" he "changeth not," is it less desirable in a nation? Nor will true "harmony and progress" ever be attained by disregard or disruption of solemn compacts, save with mutual consent of the contracting parties. The *Evangelical Churchman* does not regret the existence of the Separate School system more sincerely than THE WEEK. But a vastly greater evil would be the doing violence to the conscientious convictions of the minority by the majority, and that, too, in contravention of the original pledge of the old Province of Canada, ratified in the Constitution of the Dominion. Nor can it be wholly overlooked, though it does not affect the principle involved, that the "majority," is not after all so very "vast." Facts are stubborn and often disagreeable, but declaiming against them does not do away with them.

ANOTHER point to which the *Evangelical Churchman* recurs demands a comment. It appears that there is still, contrary to our impression, a considerable number of scholars in the French sections of the Province in which little or no English is taught. This ought not to be so. Canada is an English speaking country, and the language of the country should be taught, and taught if possible as the leading language in every school aided by public funds. But it would be unfair to ignore the fact that the matter is one of very great difficulty. No one would be so unreasonable as to contend that, in a section exclusively French, the French language should not be taught in schools mainly supported by French tax-payers. If memory serves us, the Minister of Education stated during the debate on the question in the Legislature that the Department was doing its best to have English taught in every school, but found difficulty in securing teachers with a competent knowledge of both languages. Steps should be taken to overcome this difficulty, at whatever expense. This the Legislature will no doubt insist on. At the same time it may not be amiss to remark that the work of assimilating and consolidating the somewhat heterogeneous social and religious elements of which the Dominion is composed cannot be hastened and ought not to be hastened by harsh measures. The rights of minorities must be respected; even their sentiments should not be ruthlessly trampled on. The English-speaking people of Canada are too just, as well as too generous, to blame their French fellow colonists for cherishing their own language and institutions. They cannot cling to them more tenaciously than an English colony would do, and would take pride in doing, if planted in the midst of an alien community, in an alien country, and surrounded by a majority speaking the French or some other foreign language.

THE quarrel over the vetoing of the Quebec Magistrates' Court Act is gathering momentum. The evenness of the logical contest, the fact that the Province is able to show on the one side so good cause for the enactment, and the Dominion on the other so good ground for the disallowance, is but too suggestive of ambiguity, or obscurity, in the Act of Union. Worse still, the unmistakable evidence that party spirit on both sides is at the bottom of the whole difficulty emphasizes the need of some impartial and judicial tribunal for settling questions of constitutionality. Perhaps a still more important lesson to be learned from the recurrence of such disputes, and from the spirit in which they are conducted by the Provinces, is that the current of the popular thought and feeling is setting directly away from the idea of strengthening the central authority which prevailed with the majority of the leading men of both parties at the time of Confederation, and in the direction of the largest practicable autonomy for the individual member of the Union. Whether this tendency is or is not the outcome of political wisdom is an open question. If it be, as can scarcely be doubted, a fact, it is the part of practical political sagacity for the