

HON. SOL. GEN. LANGEVIN—Hear! hear!

HON. MR. LAFRAMBOISE—The hon. member may exclaim "Hear, hear," as loudly and as often as he likes, but those who heard him deliver the (I will not say eloquent, because that would not be true) speech which he made in opposition to the first reading of the Benning Divorce Bill, and who now behold him imposing on Catholics, who do not desire it, the consequences of a principle which we then refused to apply to Protestants who sought for it—those I say are justified in believing and in saying that the Hon. Solicitor General for Lower Canada has either renounced his former opinions on divorce, inasmuch as he authorizes the Federal Legislature to legislate on this subject, and to grant divorces either to Protestants or Catholics, and either to Upper or Lower Canada, or he could not have been very sincere in his opposition to the Benning Bill. (Hear, hear.) There is one certain fact, and that is that the Protestants of Lower Canada have said to the Government, "Pass a measure which shall guarantee to us the stability and protection of our educational system and of our religious institutions, and we will support your scheme of Confederation; unless you do, we will never support you, because we do not wish to place ourselves at the mercy of a Local Legislature the three-fourths of the members of which will be Catholics." They were perfectly justifiable in acting as they did, although it is generally admitted that we Catholics have much more liberality than the Protestants—and this is to a certain extent proved by the fact that several of our Lower Canadian counties are represented by Protestants. I do not, however, Mr. SPEAKER, I do not wish to reproach the Protestant minority of Lower Canada for having protected its own interests. I admit that in doing this they have only done their duty, for who can say, after all, what ten years may bring forth? Ten years hence ideas may be changed upon this question, and if it be true, as stated by the *Toronto Globe*—and the Ministry cannot say that this journal does not speak the truth, as it is the organ of the present Government—if it be true that the Catholic clergy are an encroaching body, that they are never satisfied, and that they seek to take possession of all they see—if that be true, Mr. SPEAKER, who will say that in a few years the Lower Canadians will not be disposed to say to the Protestant

minority, "We insist that all the schools should be Catholic," as the majority in Upper Canada has said to the Catholic minority there, many and many a time, and as it will before long say again if Confederation takes place. (Hear, hear.) I need not say that I do not believe that the Catholics of this section will ever push intolerance to that extent; but on the other hand, I cannot but approve of the determination of the Protestant minority to protect themselves from all eventualities of this nature; and for the same reason, I say that we also ought to take every precaution, and that we ought not to suffer our dearest interests to be at the mercy of a Protestant majority in the Federal Legislature. (Hear, hear.) We are not justified in asking for any concessions which we are not ourselves prepared to yield. (Hear, hear.) Before the House rose at six o'clock, I stated, Mr. SPEAKER, that the plan of Confederation was, so to speak, traced word for word upon the famous report of Lord DURHAM. With the permission of the House, I will take the liberty of reading a few extracts from that report, in which the author, after having asserted a number of falsehoods in relation to our race, which I will not trouble the House with reading, declares that we ought to be merged into the English nationality. Observe how similar the ideas of the noble lord are to those which are expressed in the plan of Confederation. I cite for the second time the following paragraph:—

Never again will the British population tolerate the authority of a House of Assembly in which the French shall possess, or even approximate to, a majority.

Here, Mr. SPEAKER, we have a sentiment which shews that England has followed, step by step, the advice of Lord DURHAM. The hon. member for South Leeds said the other night that he hoped that we should soon attain to a legislative union. Well, a legislative union was also one of Lord DURHAM's dreams. I proceed to read another extract from his report:—

It will be acknowledged by every one who has observed the progress of Anglo-Saxon colonization in America, that sooner or later the English race was sure to predominate, even numerically, in Lower Canada, as they predominate already by their superior knowledge, energy, enterprise and wealth. The error, therefore, to which the present contest must be attributed, is the vain endeavor to preserve a French-Canadian nation.