

came about that these schools were guaranteed by the Constitution. And what are the facts which they would know or learn? That the Separate Schools had been guaranteed at the instance of both Ontario and Quebec, and at the instance of both the Protestant and Roman Catholic populations of the whole country; that the new Constitution had been framed with the concurrence of both Ontario and Quebec; that Catholic Quebec at the time, though with a smaller population than Ontario and with less wealth, and without having other advantages which Ontario possessed, had notwithstanding an equal representation in the Legislative Assembly of the Province, each section having 65 Members; that the practical working of the Constitution was such that under it the Separate Schools of Ontario were

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or interference; that it had been found impossible to get rid of them; that it had been practically proved to be so by the failure of an active agitation for that purpose, conducted with great energy, ability and perseverance. So, all the institutions of Lower Canada which were cherished by Roman Catholics were perfectly safe from Protestant interference. But there were difficulties in working the Constitution of 1840, and so the Confederation of 1867 had come about.

In what spirit was the new Constitution framed? It was a compromise all round, and an essential part of that compromise—so essential that without it Confederation could never have taken place—was the provision by which the Separate Schools of Ontario and the Protestant dissentient schools of Quebec were guaranteed by Imperial enactment. It was by common consent that the provision about Separate Schools had been placed amongst those provisions of the B. N. A. Act of 1867, which neither the Dominion Parliament nor a Provincial Legislature was to have power to change. There were other things in the Act which the Provinces were to be at liberty to change, and there were things which the Dominion Parliament might change; so the Act declared; but the matter of Roman Catholic Separate Schools in Ontario and Protestant Schools in Quebec was one of those which there was to be no power on this side of the Atlantic to change to the injury of these schools. But for this being guaranteed, we would have had no Dominion Parliament with its present limited powers, and no Provincial Legislatures with their powers. In consenting to Confederation on this basis, and foregoing the other advantages which the former system gave to the Roman Catho-