

Dorion, one of the finest and most noble figures of that day was suspicious of the federal system, and feared that the province would be swallowed up in the great Canadian whole. The enemies of the scheme said, as he did, that Confederation was nothing more nor less than an approach towards legislative union. Can it be said today that these fears and suspicions were well founded? It is now fifty years since our province became part of Confederation and legislative union has not come. We have legislated and we will legislate freely from the municipal and educational point of view, and we have never been molested in the administration of our civil laws. The following list will show you the number of Provincial Statutes that were disallowed by the Federal Government during the first forty years of Confederation for the four pioneer provinces: Quebec 4; Ontario 9; Nova Scotia 5; New Brunswick 1.

No, sir, not one administration at Ottawa has, as yet, attempted to force us into legislative union.

My hon. friend from Rimouski (Mr. A. Tessier), in his splendid and very eloquent speech of yesterday, enumerated the attempts made by the Federal Government to encroach upon the Provincial domain. He first spoke to us on the fisheries question. There was, in that question, grounds for a lawsuit. We pleaded our case and we won. Then came that dispute with regard to the right to legislate concerning commercial corporations. We went before the Courts and we won once more. Finally there is the quite recent case of restrictions placed on the issue of provincial and municipal debentures. That will be another lawsuit which will be much more easily won than all those we had to fight in the past. (Loud applause.)

No sir, it is not differences of opinion of this character that can lead us to legislative union. Such differences of opinion arise in all federated countries. Look at our neighbors in the United States, where they are of daily occurrence.

Thanks to Confederation, thanks to our union with the sister provinces, our province has progressed in a marvellous manner, and it cannot be denied that it is Confederation that has made Montreal, the fourth city of North America in importance. And if we turn now towards the groups of French origin which have established themselves in the Canadian provinces, can it be said that Confederation has been unfavourable to