

rights or privileges which they possessed at the time of the union. His Grace Mgr. Connolly, Archbishop of Halifax, having gone to England, pointed out, with reason, that the advantages conferred on the minorities in Upper and Lower Canada by the 43rd resolution should be extended also to the minorities in the other provinces. Knowing that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick had no law which recognized separate schools, and that in those provinces they had only certain usages or customs, Sir John, in acceding to the demand of the Archbishop, took care to add these words: 'Guaranteed or imposed by law,' after the words 'rights and privileges,' thus rendering illusory the favor which he pretended to grant to this Prince of our Church. And it is after having thus acted, that the first Minister (Sir John) recommends that the New Brunswick school acts be not disallowed, because, as he says, there was not in that province prior to the union any law on that subject."

Some time afterwards the Government disallowed an act passed by the Legislature of Ontario known as the "Streams Act;" it was a law which was in point of fact constitutional, and which contained nothing detrimental to the general interests of the Dominion, but which had the misfortune to interfere with the private interests of certain political friends of Sir John in Ontario. (Vide the Journals of the House of Commons.) In this last instance Sir John, to serve the material and personal interests of certain of his friends, did that which he had previously refused to do to render justice to 50,000 Catholics in New Brunswick, even when it was demanded by a million and a-half of their co-religionists.

In the Confederation Debates in 1865 the Catholic members of the Legislature of Canada frequently manifested their fears and apprehensions as to the position which they would occupy under the new constitution, with regard to a question so important in their eyes as that of marriage. Sir John and his colleagues made the most solemn promises and pledged their honor—they even guaranteed in writing that they would take care to leave to the local legislature the entire jurisdiction over this important subject. As a matter of fact we find at page 388 of the English edition of the Confederation Debates, that the Government of Sir John speaking through the Hon. H. L. Langevin, said:—

"The hon. member asks the Government what they mean by the word 'marriage' placed in the constitution. . . . ."

I will reply to the hon. member as categorically as possible. . . . . The word marriage has been placed in the constitutional measure to give the Federal Parliament the right to declare what shall be marriages which shall be considered as valid throughout the extent of the Confederation, without touching for that purpose, to the least extent in the world, upon the dogmas or rites of the denominations to which the contracting parties belong. The fact is that it all consists in this: the central parliament will have power to decide that all marriages contracted in Upper Canada, in conformity with the laws of the country in which they are contracted, shall be considered as valid in lower Canada in case the married couple shall go there to live."

In 1882 a measure entitled a bill concerning marriage with a deceased wife's sister was submitted to the Federal Parliament for its consideration. Objections were taken to the constitutional right of this parliament to legislate on the subject of marriage. The attention of Sir John and his colleagues in the Cabinet was called to the solemn engagements which they had undertaken in 1865 on this question, and they were shown the written pledge to which I have referred. The Government replied, through the Minister of Justice, as follows:—

"The day when we made these promises, or when we undertook those engagements, is gone by; we have to-day to act, not according to what we wished to do then, but according to what we have to do now. (Senate Debates of 1882.) In other words, he says: "You Catholics intended to put in safe hands (the Catholic government of the province of Quebec) the important question of marriage; and we (Sir John, Sir Alex. Campbell and our colleagues) have so arranged the constitutional act that we, the Protestant government at Ottawa, will have the right to regulate it. It is useless for you to protest; that is the law. It is necessary that should you submit."

They have been guilty of another great fault. In the Senate we have no minister who speaks the French language. We have here ministers who speak only the English language and reply in English to questions put by French members, who are obliged to go from seat to seat to inquire what the responses are. In 1880 the Senators from the Province of Quebec, having renewed their protest against this state of things, the hon. Minister of Justice, Sir Alexander Campbell, replied:—

"Well I admit that the fact of having no minister in the Senate who speaks the French language may be in controvention of the spirit of the constitutional act; nevertheless