

them what they fear, I am told—"Oh, you are going to hand us over to the tender mercies of the French; the English influence will be entirely annihilated; they will have no power in the community; and all the advantages we have gained during the past twenty-five years by our union with the people of our own race in Upper Canada will be entirely lost." I can but answer—"What are you afraid of? Where is the interest affecting you that is imperilled? You have, in conjunction with a majority of your own race, power in the General Legislature to appoint the local governors, administer justice and name the judges, to control the militia and all other means of defence, and to make laws respecting the post office, trade, commerce, navigation; and you have all the great and important interests that centre in the community I represent—all matters that affect the minority in Lower Canada—within your control in the Federal Legislature. The French have surrendered the questions relating to usury, to marriage and divorce, on which they hold pretty strong opinions, to the Central Government. What, then, are you afraid of in the action of the Local Legislature?" "Well," I am answered, "all that may be true enough; but we shall not get a single appointment; the administration of local affairs in Lower Canada will be entirely in the hands of the French majority, and they will control all the patronage." You say to them again—"Is it the exercise of patronage you are afraid of? Is not the appointment of the judges, the patronage of the post office, the customs, the excise, the board of works, and all the other important branches of the administration in the hands of the Federal Government? What is there, then, but a few municipal officers to be appointed by the local legislatures; and for the sake of this petty patronage, are you going to imperil the success of a scheme that is fraught with such important consequences to all the Provinces of British North America? Is it for this that you will oppose a measure that contains so many merits, that possesses so much good, and that is calculated to confer such lasting benefits upon these provinces, if not to lead to the formation of a territorial division of the British Empire here?" Well, these questions I have put, and these explanations I have made, but some still seemed to entertain an undefined dread that they could not realise to themselves—a dread which to a great extent appears to be shared by my hon.

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friend opposite (Hon. Mr. DORION) in regard to the General Legislature. Well, if we look to the history of the past twenty-five years and see how we have acted towards each other, I think neither party will have any cause for apprehension. Has there been a single act of aggression on the part of my hon. friend the Attorney General East on us the English minority, or a single act of aggression on our part towards the race to which he belongs? (Hear, hear.) Has there not been mutual respect and confidence, and has there been an act on either side to destroy that feeling? (Hear, hear.) I think the past gives assurance to us that no such difficulty will arise in the future, and that we shall continue to live and work harmoniously together, each holding the other in respect and esteem. (Hear, hear.) But we are told—and it is urged as an objection against the scheme—that works of improvement will be obstructed by the Local Government in Lower Canada. Now, I think the day has long gone by when acts which were formerly committed could possibly be repeated—when, for instance, before the union, the work carried on by the Montreal Harbor Commissioners could not be proceeded with because Mr. PAPINEAU opposed it. The days of progress and advancement have come since that time. This is an age of progress, the very spirit of which is hostile in the strongest degree to such a state of things. It is impossible for either race to treat the other with injustice. Their interests are too much bound up together, and any injustice committed by one would react quite as injuriously upon it elsewhere; and I believe that the mutual confidence with which we are going into this union ought to and will induce us all to labor together harmoniously, and endeavor to work it out for the best. (Hear, hear.) I do not disguise from myself that the minority in Lower Canada has always been on the defensive. That is a condition which is natural under the circumstances; for we cannot be in a minority without being more or less on the defensive. But I think that under this scheme the French minority in the General Legislature and the English minority in Lower Canada, will both be amply and satisfactorily protected. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, I come to the question adverted to by the hon. member for Chateauguay, in reference to the education measure which the Government has promised to bring down to the House. I believe this is the first time almost in the history of