

are the best judges, and it is they who ought to decide whether there is danger or not; and there can be no doubt but that the bishops and the clergy have consulted together respecting this article, and that they came to the conclusion that it is an evil which there are no means of preventing. The honorable member for Verchères (Mr. GEOFFRION) maintained that it was necessary to state clearly in the resolutions what were the intentions of the members of the Conference in relation to marriage and divorce, in order that the Imperial Government may not impose upon us a Constitution other than that for which we ask. Now, I have more confidence than he has in the word of our public men, and in the sense of justice of the Imperial Government. Our public men having made a compromise, and asked a Constitution for the British North American Provinces, which is to do away with the difficulties which exist in the province, are we for a single instant to believe that when this scheme, which is framed to reestablish that peace, harmony and concord of which we stand in need, is carried to England that a clause will be inserted which would raise the Lower-Canadians like one man? In such a case we should see petitions pour into the House headed with the signatures of the principal members of the clergy, exclaiming against such injustice; in such a case we should see real petitions against this attack upon our religious rights. If our institutions should be so menaced, the Lower Canadian people would do themselves justice, if it was refused to them, and we should no longer enjoy that peace which now prevails in Canada between populations of different origins and belief, in consequence of the absence of disquietude among the people—(hear, hear)—I have confidence enough in the clergy and bishops of Lower Canada to believe that if that clause, on which so much stress is laid, was of a nature to do any injury to our religious interests, they would loudly exclaim against it and have justice done us. Our bishops are not in the habit of standing in fear of the civil authorities, when their duty calls them to defend the interests which are entrusted to them. (Hear, hear.) It is stated also that the clergy are not in favor of the scheme of Confederation, because two or three of its members have written in newspapers and have signed petitions opposed to the scheme. But is that a manifestation of the opinion of

the clergy? No; for they do not write in the name of the clergy, but simply in their individual capacity as citizens; for they sign their writings under their title as citizens. Certain members of the clergy may differ widely in opinion from the remainder of their brethren; as citizens they may believe that the scheme of Confederation is a bad one, but those who hold that opinion are certainly a minority, just as in the House it is the minority of the members who are opposed to Confederation. (Hear, hear.) Mention is also made of the use of the French language; it is said that it cannot be used in the Federal Parliament. But, for my part, I am of opinion that if the scheme is adopted, the French language will be more used and will be held in higher estimation in the Federal Parliament, than it has been in this Legislature for some years. It is feared that the laws, the documents and the proceedings of the Federal Parliament are not to be printed in the French language. But what does the 46th clause of the resolutions say? It says:—

Both the English and French languages may be employed in the General Parliament, and in its proceedings, and in the Local Legislature of Lower Canada, and also in the Federal courts, and in the courts of Lower Canada.

Thus, if the use of the French language can be excluded, so also may the use of the English language be excluded, for both are on an equal footing. Because it is not stated that the laws and the proceedings of the Federal Parliament shall be printed in the French language, the conclusion is drawn that they will be so in English; but the same thing might be said of the English language, as it is not stated that they will be printed in that language. The honorable member for Verchères (Mr. GEOFFRION) would have something more; instead of the resolutions setting forth that the French language may be used, he would have them declare that it shall be used; in that case the members from Lower Canada might be compelled to speak French; but are the Upper Canadian members also to be forced to speak that language, they who do not understand a word of it? I should be with the hon. member for Verchères if we could compel Lower Canadian members to speak French, and Upper Canadian members to speak English, as in that case each would learn the language of the other. I am really of opinion that if the Hon. Attorney General