

child," they soon diminish and disappear, to be, in the words of BOSSUET, "*qu'un je ne sais quoi qui n'a plus de nom dans aucune langue* (a thing which has no name in any tongue)." (Hear, hear.) On close examination, however, it would be seen that the hon. member was not so sarcastic as might have been at first supposed, when he suggested the iris as the emblem of the new Confederation. The rainbow, from a figurative point of view, is the emblem of alliance, and consequently of strength and durability—it is the symbol of peace and calm after a long day of storm and tempest—it is the pledge of promise that, in future, the flood-gates of demagoguery will no longer be opened on the country, to leave upon its surface that morbid sediment, the fetid odors of which still offend the moral sense of the people after their unwholesome waters have retired. (Cheers.) It is the unity of many-colored rays which, combined, produces light and heat and fecundity. I should, therefore, advise those who will be charged at a future day with our new destinies to adopt the rainbow as our national emblem, and to give credit to the hon. member for Lotbinière, who will doubtless be astonished to find that he has been so wonderfully inspired. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) If there were never to be any mutual confidence among men; if we were for ever destined to fear and suspect each other reciprocally, we would be obliged to renounce all idea of government as well as all the relations of social life. The very laws which protect persons and property would be without value, because they are expounded by men. (Hear, hear.) Fortunately such is not the case, as our own history sufficiently proves. Before the union, the parliamentary majority in Lower Canada was Catholic, and although it was long involved in a struggle with power, was it ever guilty of an injustice towards the Protestant minority? (Hear, hear.) On the contrary, did it not emancipate the latter, civilly and religiously, and did it not give that minority privileges which it had not hitherto possessed? If our people are inflexibly attached to our faith, it is also full of toleration, of good-will towards those who are not of the same belief. Since the union the parts have changed. Protestantism predominates in the government and in the legislature, and yet has not Catholicity been better treated, and has it not been better developed, with more liberty and more prosperity than under the regime of the Con-

stitution of 1791. (Hear, hear.) Living and laboring together we have learned to know, to respect, to esteem each other, and to make mutual concessions for the common weal. We Catholics have therefore no fear of the ill-will of a Protestant majority in the Federal Government and Legislature, and we are certain that the Protestants of Lower Canada need not fear for themselves in the local legislature. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) The hon. member for Hochelaga has declared that he was willing to accord to the Protestants the guarantees of protection which they sought for the education of their children; but in this he has been forestalled by the Quebec Conference and by the unanimous sentiment of the Catholic population of Lower Canada. If the present law be insufficient, let it be changed. Justice demands that the Protestant minority of Lower Canada shall be protected in the same manner as the Catholic minority of Upper Canada, and that the rights acquired by the one and the other shall not be assailed either by the Federal Parliament or the local legislatures. (Hear, hear.) This is all I feel called upon to say, on this occasion, respecting a question which will again arise in the course of the debate. The hon. member for Lotbinière has attacked the scheme as being too federal, and the hon. member for Hochelaga has condemned it as not being sufficiently federal, and as tending too much towards unity. Neither one nor the other is strictly accurate—it is not absolute unity, nor the federal principle in the American sense. In the American Confederation, supreme authority proceeded at the outset from the delegation of the states, which nevertheless divested themselves of it forever—at least according to the opinion of the Northern juriconsults, who hold that no state is free to break the compact of 1788. In the scheme of the Quebec Conference there was no delegation of the supreme authority, either from above or below, inasmuch as the provinces, not being independent states, received, their political organizations from the Parliament of the Empire. There are only distinct attributes for the one and the others. (Hear, hear.) Unity does not obtain in an absolute sense, because local interests and institutions required in the local constitutions, guarantees and protections which they feared they would not find in the united Parliament and Government. But it is as complete as possible, inasmuch as unity gives to institutions chances of duration, and an initiatory force which is not given, which