

who now concede representation based upon population, obtained in Lower Canada by loudly proclaiming that the Liberal party, or rather the "*Rouge* party," as they were pleased to style us, were ready to grant to the Honorable President of the Council representation based upon population? Well, Mr. SPEAKER, the accusation made against the Liberal party, of being prepared to grant to the Honorable President of the Council his cherished measure, I shall leave to that hon. gentleman himself the task of answering. We heard him declare in this House that he had offered the hon. member for Hochelaga to continue to work with him if he was willing to concede the principle of representation based upon population, and that that gentleman having refused to comply with the demand, he had accepted the alliance of the Hon. Attorney General East, who gave him all he asked. (Hear, hear.) But, Mr. SPEAKER, there is something still more important than that. A few days ago, the Hon. President of the Council, addressing the hon. members for Hochelaga and Chateauguay, said, "I had long considered that you were the best friends of Upper Canada, but I can see to-day that you are not, and that our real friends are the Hon. Attorney General for Lower Canada and his Lower Canada colleagues." (Hear, hear.) After having granted the favorite measure of the great Clear Gait chief, the Lower Canada delegates doubtless considered that that was not sufficient, since they also made another important concession to Upper Canada and to the Protestants of Lower Canada, by vesting in the Federal Government the power of legislating on marriage and divorce—(hear, hear)—two questions upon which the French-Canadians were united by the bonds of a common faith, and on which they could not tolerate any discussion; and the Ministers, therefore, ought not to have made those concessions, which are utterly opposed to the religious doctrines they themselves profess. I say that power has been given to the Federal Government to legislate on divorce and to legalize it, and I am not mistaken in saying it, for the principle is adopted by the fact of giving to the Federal Legislature the right of legislating on this question. This power ought to have been granted to the local legislatures, and not to the Federal Legislature, as has been done; and I shall prove it in this way: the other day, the Hon. Solicitor General

for Lower Canada (Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN) told us, that as regards Lower Canada, there was no necessity for granting to its legislature the power of legislating on divorce, because, said he, "the religious authorities are recognized; but it was necessary and proper to grant that power to Upper Canada." (Hear, hear.) Now, I ask, if Lower Canada did not require that power of legislating, why has it been given to the Federal Legislature, which will be composed in great majority of Protestants, who do not hold the same opinion that we do on these questions, when it is evident that that Legislature will probably grant bills of divorce to all persons who apply for them, without considering whether the parties are Catholics or Protestants? If divorce is condemned by the Catholic religion, I maintain that it is wrong to grant that power to a Legislature which will be composed in great part of Protestant members, ready to legislate on divorce, and to grant divorces to those who bring forward what they may consider reasonable grounds, sufficient to entitle them to obtain divorce, without considering whether the religious faith of the parties permits or does not permit divorce. If divorce be condemned by the Catholic Church—and all the world knows that it is so condemned in the most formal manner—the power of the Legislature in this matter ought to have been restricted, and not made general, as it is proposed to make it in the scheme of Confederation submitted to us. Mr. SPEAKER, I have shown, I think, that Lower Canada has gained nothing, but that she has conceded everything in this compromise; true, in order to cover these guilty concessions, we are told, "But the protection of our institutions and the maintenance of our laws are fully and amply guaranteed to us by the new Constitution." In the first place, under the Confederation, our institutions will not be protected—as it has vainly been attempted to demonstrate they will; but, even though it were the case, does not the Constitution under which we now live afford us infinitely better guarantees for all our dearest liberties? Let us examine, for a moment, what species of guarantee we have under the present system, and what guarantees we shall have under the Federal system. The guarantee which the French-Canadians have under the present system, consists in the fact that out of 65 members, they count at least 51 of their own origin and faith, and that they