

cussed and carried by means of mutual concessions.

The resolutions show at their very face that they are a compromise.

On February 6, 1865, the Hon. Mr. Campbell said :

It is the result of discussions, agreements and compromises between various parties.

On the same day, Sir John A. Macdonald said again :

The whole plan of confederation, as worked out by the conference and submitted by the Canadian government for the approbation of the people and the legislature, has the character of a compromise.

Sir George E. Cartier accepted the principle of representation based on population ; Sir John A. Macdonald gave up his principle of legislative union. And if the federal system is to be continued, it is necessary that our statesmen, our law-makers in this country, inhabited by the people of various nationalities and creeds, and whose numbers will go on constantly increasing, principally in the Northwest, in the two provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, it is necessary, I say, that they should, that we should, be inspired by these principles, by these generous and broad-minded dispositions, that we should continue to mutually make these concessions to which Sir John Macdonald referred in 1865.

Such is the policy which inspired the Bill now under discussion in this House. It is the outcome of an honourable compromise, insuring justice to the minority, respect for vested rights, confirming them and safeguarding them for the future. As it is, we prefer it to the amendment moved by the hon. leader of the opposition which, were it to be adopted, would hand over to the local legislature, that is to the majority, the rights of the Catholic minority in the two new provinces of the Northwest. As for us, representatives of the minority in the Dominion we object to the rights of our own fellow-churchmen being left without any safeguard to an uncertain future. We are justified in having greater apprehensions, greater fears, greater cause for alarm than had the Protestant minority of the province of Quebec at the time of confederation. In 1865, the Protestant minority of Lower Canada claimed protection, through a petition addressed to parliament previous to entering confederation. And that, notwithstanding the fact that French Canadians had always shown themselves broad, generous and liberal towards them. Never have the French Canadians in the province of Quebec attempted to interfere with the rights of the minority. Far from that, since the day we obtained, subsequent to the parliamentary contests of which you know, Mr. Speaker, the full and complete administration of our affairs, we treated our fellow-citizens of another race as friends

Mr. BRUNEAU.

and brethren. From 1791 up to this date, we have, on several occasions, sent to parliament to defend our interests many an English-speaking or Protestant member. We have given them their share of parliamentary honours, they have had their proportion of patronage, of government positions, from those who had suffered so much at the hands of the family compact. But we are fretful ; and we believe we are justified in so being, considering the treatment which has been meted out to us at certain periods of our history. That is the reason why, as far as I am concerned, I cannot agree to support the amendment of the hon. leader of the opposition, and leave the new legislatures have a free hand in the establishment and selection of their school system. Are these apprehensions warranted? We are told : Trust the majority ! Our answer is this : Similar promises have so often been broken, that we now want greater security. I shall explain. In 1890, have not separate schools, in Manitoba, been abolished in spite of the guarantees which Catholics were confident of holding under the constitution? Has not the separate school system been abolished in spite of their good faith, in spite of the compact and the solemn promises made at the time Manitoba entered the confederation ; in spite of the pledges given to the Catholic and French minority of Manitoba, that if they gave their consent to the abolition of the legislative council of that province, which was considered as the protector of their rights, they would have no reason for regret ? All those facts have been eloquently set forth in this House, on March 13, 1896, by the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) to-day the member for North Toronto.

We are fretful ? How could we be otherwise ? In 1892, has not the Northwest legislature broken the constitution as regards the separate schools of the Catholic minority ? Has not their appeal for disallowance been rejected, in 1894, by the Minister of Justice, Sir John Thompson ? How could we banish all apprehensions for the future, when we have these facts fresh in our minds, facts which are recorded in history and which are part of that series of grievances to which our race has been subjected. For we are not making any mistake about it. The reason for giving to the legislatures of the new provinces absolute control over the school system is not, in my opinion, a desire to comply with the constitution. It is because certain bigoted persons fear lest the Catholic religion should be taught in the schools, and lest our tongue and influence should spread.

Allow me to add, Mr. Speaker, that we would be entirely justified in taking a rather dark view of the future, as Catholics or French Canadians, should the control of the school system be left to a legislature which has already deliberately broken the