THE UNIFICATION OF RACES.

The western problem is of immense interest and of enormous signification.

We are entrusted with the task of assimilating men of many creeds and various nationalities to find for these elements one common tongue and one common patriotism.

Should we fail to make use of the national schools for this vital work of unification and consolidation, we shall be guilty of deliberate treason towards the community. That result is being accomplished through the young statesmen of the west, and we are here to-night to tell the Ottawa politicians and the Quebec hierarchy to mind their own business.

Let me say to Mr. Willison, in all frankness, that the unification of races is a delusion. All attempts to make us renounce our national characteristics are bound to fail, whether at his hands or at the hands of others, and whatever be the means taken for that purpose, even if it be the abolition of our separate schools. Every effort has been made, and what has been the result? Although separated from our old mother country by the breadth of the Atlantic ocean, although deprived by the fate of war of our old flag, although more than a century has rolled by, we in spite of a most painful and prolonged abandonment, have remained Frenchmen, have remained Catholics; and that persistence of that patriotic attachment to, French sentiments and ideas, is certainly one of the most striking facts in the history of all nations. Henry IV used to say that natives of Gascony would thrive everywhere; but what would he not have said of the French Canadians, had he known them. The 60,000 settlers, given up by France to England in 1763, now number 1,322,115 in the province of Quebec; 158,671, in Ontario; 45,161, in Nova Scotia; 79,979, in New Brunswick; 13,866, in Prince Edward Island; 16,021, in Manitoba; 4,600, in British Columbia, and 8,958 in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon; that is altogether 1,649,371. And we are nearly 2,000,000 in the United States, who are working our way over there in all directions. We have five representatives in the Ontario legislature, and one cabinet minister. Our political influence in that province is such, to-day that, according to a member of the press gallery, with whom I had a talk, the other day, if no change occurs in the meantime, we will, twenty-five years hence, be holding the balance of power in that province. Is that the result of the denominational teaching in our separate schools? I could not say. But what I do know it is that if we have our faults as all other people have theirs, we have, thank God, a deep respect for divine and human laws. We are in favour of harmony. Our wish is to live peaceably with other races; we respect them; we are loyal subjects of His Majesty, but as for unification, never. Listen to these words of Sir George Etienne Cartier which I find in the Debates on Confederation, page 59.

Objection had been taken to the scheme now under consideration, because of the words 'New Nationality.' Now, when we were united together, if union were attained, we would form a political nationality with which neither the national origin, nor the religion of any individual would interfere. It was lamented by some that we had this diversity of races, and hopes were expressed that this distinctive future would cease. The idea of unity of races is Utopian—it is impossible. Distinctions of this kind will always exist. Dissimilarity, in fact, appeared to be the order of the physical world and of the moral world, as well as of the political world. But with regard to the objection based on this fact, to the effect that a great nation could not be formed because Lower Canada was in great part French and Catholic, and Upper Canada was British and Protestant and the lower provinces were mixed, it was futile and worthless in the extreme. Look, for instance, at the United Kingdom, inhabited as it was by three great races. (Hear, hear.) Had the diversity of races impeded the glory, the progress, the wealth of England? Had they not rather each contributed their share to the greatness of the empire? Of the glories of the Senate the field and the ocean, of the successes of trade and commerce, how much was contributed by the combined talents, energy and courage of the three races together? (Cheers.) In our federation we should have Catholics and Protestants, English, French, Irish and Scotch, and each by his efforts and his success would increase the prosperity and glory of the new confederacy. (Hear, hear.) He viewed the diversity of races in British North America in this way: We were of different races, not for the purpose of warring against each other, but in order to compete and emulate for the general welfare. (Cheers.) We could not do away with the distinctions of race. We could not legislate for the disappearance of the French Canadians from American soil, but British and French Canadians alike could appreciate and understand their position relative to each other They were placed like great families beside each other, and their contact produced a healthy spirit of emulation. It was a benefit rather than otherwise that we had a diversity of races. Of course, the difficulty, it would be said, would be to deal fairly by the minority. In Upper Canada, the Catholics would find themselves in a minority. In Lower Canada, the Protestants would be in a minority, while the lower provinces were divided. Under such circumstances, would any one pretend that either the local or the general governments would sanction any injustice?

It is for the very reason that the scheme of confederation appeared to us as a barrier against unification, that we have accepted it under certain conditions, for confederation is a compromise. On February 3, 1865, Sir A. P. Taché, in introducing the Bill, stated:

Our position requires mutual toleration. Our existence will be a long succession of compromises.

On the same day, Sir John A. Macdonald spoke as follows:

This is a treaty between the various colonies, each clause of which has been thoroughly dis-