

compelled to learn the French language for business purposes and for social intercourse, and in Upper Canada the French are compelled to learn English for similar purposes, surely that need not be a subject for regret to the one or to the other, inasmuch as both will gain by it. And this further advantage will accrue to those skilled in both languages: they will have access to the literature, the philosophy and the science of the two foremost nations of the world. No attempt will be made to ignore the French language among us, so long as those who prefer it to all others shall deem it worthy of preservation. (Hear, hear.) Give the people of Upper and Lower Canada a common object to pursue, and common interests to sustain, and all questions of origin, and creed, and institutions, and language will vanish in the superior end to be attained by their closer union among ourselves, or by their wider union with other colonists under the proposed scheme of Confederation. (Hear, hear.) The great difficulty under which we labor, and which we seek to overcome, is a political and not a social one. It has its root in the Constitution imposed upon the provinces in 1841 by the Imperial Government and Legislature. That Constitution was founded on injustice to Lower Canada, and its fruit, as was then foreseen, has produced the grossest injustice to Upper Canada. Had the principle of representation based on population been then adopted, and the line which separated Upper from Lower Canada been obliterated, except for judicial purposes, we should now be working harmoniously together, instead of seeking organic changes in the Constitution, in order to preserve ourselves from revolution and anarchy. (Hear, hear.) The honorable member for Bagot (Hon. Mr. LAFRAMBOISE), in his speech, quoted largely from the report of Lord DURHAM, to show that that distinguished nobleman was prejudiced against Lower Canadians, and was indisposed to do them justice. By selecting here and there passages from that able document, the hon. gentleman gave a colorable appearance to his accusation, but nothing more. I deem it an act of justice to Lord DURHAM to supplement the extracts read by the hon. member, by further extracts which will shew that His Lordship was governed by exact and impartial justice in the measures which he recommended to heal the divisions which then existed in Canada. With the prescient sagacity of a true statesman, he said :—

As the mere amalgamation of the two Houses of Assembly of the two provinces would not be advisable, or give a due share of representation to each, a parliamentary commission should be appointed for the purpose of forming the electoral divisions, and determining the number of members to be returned on the principle of giving representation, as near as may be, in proportion to population.

Where, I ask, is the injustice of this recommendation? Lower Canada had then the larger population, and was entitled to the larger representation in the united Legislature. But the Imperial authorities based the Constitution which they gave to Canada, not on representation according to numbers, but on equality or equal numbers of representatives for the two sections of the province, and the result we have to deplore this day. His Lordship goes on to say :—

I am averse to every plan that has been proposed for giving an equal number of members to the two provinces, in order to attain the temporary end of outnumbering the French, because I think the same object will be attained without violating the principles of representation, and without any such appearance of injustice in the scheme as would set public opinion, both in England and America, strongly against it; and because, when emigration shall have increased the English population in Upper Canada, the adoption of such a principle would operate to defeat the very purpose it is intended to serve. It appears to me that any such electoral management, founded on present provincial divisions, would tend to defeat the purposes of union, and perpetuate the idea of disunion.

These are words of wisdom, but they were not listened to at home, and the consequences have been lamentable. We find Upper and Lower Canada in a state of antagonism, and collision imminent. We find the Legislature brought to a dead-lock, and our public men driven to their wit's end. All this was foreseen by Lord DURHAM and provided for in his admirable suggestions for the future government of this important province. And then, in reference to the peculiar institutions of Lower Canada, its religion and its laws, he said :—

I certainly should not like to subject the French-Canadians to the rule of the identical English minority with which they have been so long contending; but from a majority emanating from so much more extended a source, I do not think they would have any oppression or injustice to fear; and in this case the far greater part of the majority never having been brought into collision, would regard them with no animosity that would warp their natural sense of equity. The endow.