

as if there was but one religion in the land.

MR. DUFRESNE (Iberville)—We are well off, but us remain so.

HON. SOL. GEN. LANGEVIN—Yes, but we cannot remain in the position in which we are. The hon. member for Hochelaga has said so for ten years past, and undertook to change it. He said the position was no longer tenable in 1854, and if it was not tenable then, it is still less so in 1865. I now come to the other alternative proposed to us—that of independence. Men may be found, both in the House and out of the House, who would be disposed to say that we had better have independence than Confederation. For my part, I believe that the independence of the British North American Provinces would be the greatest misfortune which could happen to them; it would be to leave us at the mercy of our neighbors, and to throw us into their arms. Independence would make us masters of our position, but at the same time we should be deprived of the protection of England, and without that it is by no means difficult to foresee what would become of us. The hon. member for Hochelaga may think it to our advantage to be weak, but in that opinion I do not coincide; I consider that it is better to be in a position to meet the enemy in case of his attacking us. Let it be well understood that without the protection of England we can do nothing. And besides the outlay which would be entailed by our providing for our defence, there would also be enormous expenditure in order to keep up in a suitable manner our relations with foreign powers. With independence, and without the support and assistance of England, we should have to maintain an army and a very expensive government, we should have to keep up diplomatic relations with other countries, and provide means to defray a host of other expenses which we should not have to do under Confederation. Independence is, therefore, out of the question for the present. Lastly, we have the fourth alternative—the Confederation of the two Canadas, proposed by the honorable member for Hochelaga. In his manifesto of 1864 he told us in what position we should then be. The following passage is from the manifesto in question:—

It would have been easy at any time to satisfy Upper Canada by giving her four or five members more than Lower Canada, preserving at the same time equality in the Legislative Council. To avoid the danger which this increase of members

might entail, it is proposed to give Upper Canada seventeen members more than Lower Canada, and there are added besides forty-seven members more for the Maritime Provinces; in all sixty-four members are added to the British element besides the twenty-eight additional members which are given to the Legislative Council; and this is the way in which it is pretended that the rights of Lower Canada are to be protected.

The hon. member for Hochelaga according to his own plan would have preferred—

HON. MR. DORION—It is not a plan, it is an argument.

HON. SOL. GEN. LANGEVIN—Then it is a very bad argument—an argument by no means advantageous to Lower Canada. The hon. member says in that manifesto that it would be quite an easy matter to secure the silence of Upper Canada, by granting it four or five more members than Lower Canada. But the hon. member very well knows that if we were to grant representation based on population, it would not be four or five members we should have to give to Upper Canada, but the seventeen members which it is now proposed to give Upper Canada by the plan of Confederation. The increase would not be based on an imaginary number. But even with four or five members more in the present union, Upper Canada could impose its decision on all questions which might come before the House. The hon. member for Hochelaga has told us that under the proposed system Upper Canada will have seventeen members more than Lower Canada, and that the English element will be increased by the addition of all the members from the Lower Provinces, and that they will enter into a league against us Lower Canadians. I must say, I do not think the hon. member pays a very high compliment to his ex-colleague the Hon. Mr. HOLTON, when he says that because the members will be English, they will be against us French-Canadians. So great was his confidence in the hon. member for Chateaugay, that he took him into his Government, and would take him again to-day if he had the opportunity; and yet the hon. member for Hochelaga speaks of the English as though they were our natural enemies. For my part, I do not think they are; moreover, the question before us is not the formation of a Local Government only. We are considering the establishment of a Confederacy—with a Central Parliament and local parliaments. The Central or Federal Parliament will have the control of all measures