

instruction have made immense progress. Before the union we had no Catholic university in the country. Young men intending to enter the liberal professions were compelled, instead of following a regular course, to content themselves with what they could acquire in the office of their patrons, who were not in all cases competent for the task they undertook, or else to go abroad at great expense for many years, in order to obtain in England or France a certificate of qualification. To-day we have in Lower and in Upper Canada universities rivalling European universities of the same class, and we have also a body of young students, who, fifteen or twenty years hence, will give proof of the excellence of our university system, and of the high curriculum of studies these institutions have now rendered universal. Now, in face of the degree of progress I have just referred to, in the social order, can it be truly said that the union has run its day, when all these marvels are its creation? When we are stronger and better educated than we were twenty years ago; when we have new political rights: when we have a free right to the soil, and when we have created a system of public instruction such as we now enjoy, can it be said that the union has done its work, and that it must be broken up? For my part, Mr. SPEAKER, I am not prepared to support that assertion. The union has been for us a great means of progress, since it has enabled us to secure all these results in the social order. The Hon. Attorney General East has told us that Confederation will procure us material advantages still greater, and that that is all we want. I deny, Mr. SPEAKER, that material interests form the sole ambition of the French-Canadian population. We attach a far higher importance to the preservation of our own institutions. But even as regards material interests, apart from the advantages, in the social order, derived from the union, we have still a vast field before us as regards the progress we have made since 1840. In order to see what the union has done in this respect, it is sufficient to look at our system of railroads, and above all, at the great Grand Trunk line from Sarnia to Rivière du Loup, which has increased our commerce tenfold, opened our dense forests to colonization, and multiplied our resources to an incalculable extent; it is sufficient to look at our ports of Montreal and Quebec during the season of navigation, filled with vast forests of shipping, to see our trans-atlantic steamers bearing off weekly

the products of our country to the most distant European markets, in exchange for the articles of import we require. And if we ascend our great River St. Lawrence, what do we see? We find canals, which in their dimensions, the materials of which they are constructed, and in their extent, are unsurpassed in any part of the world. I maintain, Mr. SPEAKER, that there is nothing to be found in Europe to compare with our artificial water communications. In England, for instance, the canals are only miserable gutters, and the little boys, in rowing their boats, can touch both sides at once with the ends of their oars. Here our canals pass through the whole country, and connect the most remote parts of it with the markets of Europe. And, in fact, a ship of four hundred tons burden can now sail from Chicago, cross the ocean, and discharge her cargo in the docks at Liverpool. The union which has given us such canals, such railways, has not run its day, has not done its work, as the Hon. Attorney General East pretends. On the contrary, with such means as these, we are justified in anticipating from the union still greater results in the future. If we look at our colonization, we behold the forest receding before the axe of the settler, the products of our land increased tenfold, and our settlers locating in advance of the surveyor on our wild lands. What the union has already done for us is certainly great, but the advantages it has in store for us are still greater, if we know how to avail ourselves of the means it places at our command. Therefore it is that I do not think the union has done its work, but that, on the contrary, it will yet secure our prosperity. And hence it is that I wish to preserve the union and remain under allegiance to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen of England, and refuse to accept constitutional changes which must of necessity imperil our future as a nation. (Hear, hear.) It has often been said that Lower Canada was a drag on Upper Canada, retarding her advancement in the march of progress, and that a new Constitution was necessary. I deny the justice of the accusation, and I maintain that such a charge could only emanate from Upper Canadian fanaticism. True, the French-Canadian race has been characterized at Toronto by a Governor General as an "inferior race," but the insult thus offered to Lower Canada has not a single fact to bear it out. Moreover,