

to demand it simply in order to compensate for that absence of opposition which gives incessant trouble to the hon. member for Hochelaga? (Hear, hear.) The honorable member for Hochelaga spoke of public meetings held in certain counties in the district of Montreal; but those meetings are far from possessing the importance which he assigns to them. We all know how they can be got up everywhere, and what they amount to. However the case may be there, there have been none such in the district of Quebec, and even in the district of Three Rivers, against Confederation, and it cannot be said that the members who represent those districts, and who vote for this measure, are acting in opposition to the wishes of their constituents. Such meetings are only found to occur in the district of Montreal, where the party of the honorable member is most strongly represented; but an opinion may be formed as to those meetings from what is going on at Quebec at this moment. While the whole body of citizens are calling for the suspension of the present municipal council, some individuals interested in keeping it in authority are calling public meetings in the nooks and corners of the suburbs. (Hear, hear.) The honorable member made tremendous efforts to prove that the interests of our religion, our nationality and our institutions would be in a position of much greater safety in his hands than they would be in those of the majority. For my part, I am willing to leave to public opinion the care of deciding that question; and as he declares himself to hold that opinion in great respect, I must suppose that he will agree with me on this point. (Hear, hear.) I would not assert that the honorable member is himself personally hostile to the religion and the institutions of Lower Canada; but I may say that all the tendencies of the party which he represents are adverse to those same institutions. (Hear, hear.) There is sufficient proof of this in the writings and the acts of that party. As to my opinion respecting Confederation, I may repeat here what I have already said on a former occasion, and that is, that no one knew what that opinion was, how I should write, and on what side I should write, when I began my work. I kept silence that I might not be annoyed either by friends or by opponents, and in order that I might be able to judge of the question in the fulness of my liberty.

(Hear.) Mention has been made of the dangers of Confederation. I know that every question has its dangers, and it is probable that this one presents some such in the same way as all others do; but the greatest danger that we could incur would be the bringing on of a conflict between the Catholics and Protestants, by appeals like those which certain members on the left have made to the religious passions of our population. (Hear, hear.) In what position should we find ourselves, we Catholics, if we provoked such a conflict? The 258,000 Catholics of Upper Canada are represented in this House by but two members, those for Cornwall and Glengarry (Hon. J. S. and Mr. D. A. Macdonald), whilst the Protestants of Lower Canada are represented by fifteen or sixteen members; and in case of a conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants, what would become of us? (Hear, hear.) From the justice, the wisdom and the liberality of our acts alone have we hitherto found our strength and our protection to proceed, and from them shall we again find them to proceed under Confederation. (Hear.) The honorable member for Hochelaga quoted a garbled portion of my first pamphlet, to give it a meaning which it does not convey; he then accuses me of having changed my opinion as to the Constitution of the Legislative Council. But I can tell him that I have never changed my opinion on that question; I have never been in favor of the elective principle being applied to the Legislative Council; and if in 1858 I prepared and introduced the law which changed the constitution of that body, it was only that I might gratify the universal opinion which desired an elective Legislative Council. But, the honorable member for Hochelaga will reply, did you not write in 1858:—

The best possible condition under which Confederation could exist would be that in which the two chambers would be elective, and would both have population as the basis of their number; for no other system, excepting that of having but one chamber only, with the number of its members based on population, would give us absolutely one vote in three in the Federal Legislature.

Was the question then whether the elective principle was preferable to that of appointment? No; we were discussing a question of much greater importance, that of ascertaining in what condition of constitutional existence we should find the greatest protec-