

ected from the attacks of our adversaries. Every danger of false interpretation ought to be removed from these resolutions. If, as it is stated, our language is to be fully protected under the new system, I do not see why it is not so stated clearly in the Constitution. The explanations of the Honorable Solicitor General for Lower Canada (Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN) are all very well, but they are not sufficient, and I should much prefer a written statement in the Constitution itself, formally setting forth that these matters shall not be affected by any legislation of the Federal Government. (Hear, hear.) I trust the English members of this House will not take offence at my insisting on more ample guarantees for our religious and national institutions, and that they will see that it is not through a spirit of hostility to their institutions, and that the same motives that induce them to demand more ample guarantees for their national minority in Lower Canada—guarantees which were claimed the other evening by the honorable member for Montreal Centre (Hon. Mr. ROSE)—make me ask for the same guarantees for my fellow-countrymen.

HON. SOL. GEN. LANGEVIN—Will my honorable friend allow me to say a few words in explanation? He said he hoped the Government and members on this side of the House would admit that his desire was to defend the religious and national interests of Lower Canada. The honorable member for Verchères need not be uneasy on that point. For it must always be taken for granted—and every member on this side of the House will agree with me in this—that every sentiment expressed on the floor of this House by honorable gentlemen opposite, relative to those questions touching our nationality and our religion, is frank and sincere, and we, therefore, feel that in expressing himself as he has done, the honorable member for Verchères is perfectly frank and sincere. However, I take the liberty of answering him on two points. The first question is that of marriage. The honorable member did not quote the whole of that portion of my speech which relates to marriage; he simply quoted the first part, but he ought to have given the second, which is as follows:—

The fact is that the whole matter amounts to this—the Central Government may decide that any marriage contracted in Upper Canada or in any of the Confederated provinces, in accordance with the laws of the country in which it was contracted, although that law might be different from ours, should be deemed valid in Lower Canada,

in case the parties should come to reside there, and *vice versa*.

This was merely a development of what I said. I stated before that the interpretation I had given of the word “marriage” was that of the Government and of the Conference of Quebec, and that we wished the Constitution to be drafted in that sense. The honorable member for Verchères quoted that part of the draft of the civil code which states that one of the articles provides that a marriage contracted in any country whatever, according to the laws of the country in which it shall have been contracted, shall be valid, and he argues from that, that since it was declared by the civil code, there was no necessity for inserting it in the resolutions. But the honorable member must be aware that that part of the code may be repealed at any time, and that if this occurred, parties married under the circumstances referred to would no longer enjoy the protection they now have and which we desire to secure for them under the Constitution. I maintain, then, that it was absolutely necessary to insert the word “marriage” as it has been inserted, in the resolutions, and that it has no other meaning than the meaning I attributed to it in the name of the Government and of the Conference. Thus the honorable member for Verchères had no grounds for asserting that the Federal Legislature might change that part of the civil code which determines the age at which marriage can be contracted without the consent of parents. Another point on which the honorable member for Verchères insisted, no doubt with the view of obtaining information, which I shall be delighted to afford if it should induce him to vote for the resolutions—and I am perfectly certain it ought to be sufficient—is the point as to the use of the French language under Confederation. The forty-sixth resolution is as follows:—

The English and French languages may be used simultaneously in the proceedings of the Federal Parliament as well as in the the Legislature of Lower Canada and in the Federal courts and in the courts of Lower Canada.

The honorable member for Verchères says—“It is true that the French language may be used in the Federal Parliament and in the Legislature of Lower Canada, as well as in the courts of justice of the Confederation, but the resolutions do not affirm that that language may be used in the drafting of laws and in the *Votes and Proceedings* of the Federal and Local Legislatures.” Well,