

but lakes of gold at our disposal. I think the honorable member's figures of rhetoric have carried him rather too far; and I sincerely believe that instead of that prosperous and happy future foreseen by him, we are preparing for ourselves a state of things which will cause us to repent in ten years of what we are now doing. I believe that we are commencing Confederation ten years too soon. (Hear, hear.) We should have an Intercolonial Railway at least five or six years before thinking of Confederation. At present we are as much strangers to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia as we were previous to last autumn. We may perhaps know them a little better than we did before we began to discuss Confederation; and we ought, in the first place, to establish easy methods of communication between those provinces and ourselves, as a means of bringing about Confederation at some future day, if it be practicable. I say that the Intercolonial Railway ought first to be built, and that Confederation might be put off even several years after that. (Hear, hear.) Article 41 of the resolutions before us says as follows:—

The Local Government and Legislature of each province shall be constructed in such manner as the existing Legislature of each such province shall provide.

If I understand that article right, the local constitution of Lower Canada will be settled by the present Legislature; just as in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, &c., the present legislatures will decide on the constitution of their legislatures under Confederation. Very well; but in that case Upper Canada will give us a constitution, as we may give her one. The effect of that clause will be, that in order to the organization of its local constitution, Lower Canada will stand with 47 French-Canadian votes, against 83 votes of members of other origins. We shall therefore not stand on the same footing as New Brunswick or Nova Scotia in this respect; the difference will be very great. (Hear, hear.) We have only 47 French-Canadian votes out of 130, and we could not count on Upper Canadian members for the safety of our interests—either local or religious—whereas they would have the support of all the English and Protestant members from Lower Canada. (Hear.) And in Confederation the English minority of Lower Canada will not make common cause with the French-Canadian party, but, on the contrary, with the Upper Canadian party;

for they will look to Upper Canada for protection. (Hear, hear.) We are told that all our interests and institutions are protected, and that the clergy are in favor of Confederation. I, for my own part, have seen no proof of the truth of that assertion; I believe that the clergy have not made any display of their opinions on this question. I am moreover convinced that those of that body who have considered the question, have looked upon it as fraught with danger for us—as pregnant with evils, the development of which may be grievous to us as a nation hereafter. Another part of the resolutions which we should not adopt without consideration, is that contained in the 34th article of clause 29. It reads as follows:—

The General Parliament shall have power to make laws for the establishment of a General Court of Appeal for the Federated Provinces.

We have a guarantee that we are to have our own local tribunals, that our judges will be taken from the bar of Lower Canada, and that our civil laws will be maintained. Why then establish a Federal Court of Appeals, in which appeals will lie from the decisions of all our judges? We are told, it is true, by the Hon. Minister of Finance, that the resolutions did not create a Court of Appeals, but only gave the Federal Parliament the power to create it. But what difference is there between creating the court forthwith and granting a right to create it hereafter? The principle is the same. If the Government may lawfully create such a court, no one can prevent the Federal Government from establishing it whenever they think fit. Would this tribunal be an advantage to us French-Canadians, who are so attached to our civil code? It will be composed of judges from all the provinces—from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Upper Canada, &c.; and notwithstanding the talents and the learning of all those judges, we Lower Canadians cannot hope to find the same justice from such a tribunal as we should receive from one consisting of judges from Lower Canada; for our laws being different from the laws of those provinces, they will not be able to understand and appreciate them as Lower Canadians would. (Hear, hear.) And, moreover, when this new Court of Appeals is instituted, the appeal to England will not be abolished, so that we shall have one more means of producing delay and increasing the costs of suitors. Lower Canadians will