

bishop gave judgment, declaring the marriage null in a canonical sense. Regarded in a civil point of view, the marriage was still valid until it should have been declared null by a civil tribunal. It became necessary, therefore, to carry the cause before the Superior Court, and my honorable friend, the member for Beauce, who took the case in hand with his usual zeal and legal address, obtained from the court, after a suitable inquiry, a judgment declaring the marriage null in a civil sense, and ordering that it should be registered as such in all places where it should be needful. If this affair had occurred in Upper Canada, what recourse would the parties have had? The parties being Catholics, the case would have been brought before the bishop, who would also have declared the marriage null after suitable inquiry; but the cause would not have had the same conclusion in the civil court, particularly had it depended on certain impediments which have force in Lower Canada, but none in Upper Canada. It would have become necessary to go to Parliament to pray for an act, which, in a Catholic point of view, would be a mere decree of separation, but which the Parliament would have termed an act of divorce. This power to grant a separation is therefore necessarily vested in the Parliament, by whatever name such separation may be designated, and we are not to be reproached for the interpretation which others may give to such name, different from that which we assign to it. I thought it right to make myself understood on this point, because I do not choose that people should be able to say we are afraid of explaining our position with regard to the question of divorce and marriage, and I believe that I have shown that our position is consistent with our religious laws and our principles as Catholics. I regret that I have dwelt so long on the matters touched upon by the honorable member for Hochelaga; but after his speech, and considering the position he assumed, he must have expected an answer. And, having done with him, I come to the honorable member for Lotbinière (Mr. JOLY). That honorable member has endeavored to prove that all confederations die of consumption, and has cited, in support of his argument, the political condition of the Spanish republics of South America. Why did he say nothing of the Germanic Confederation? If he had mentioned that, he would have had to confess that it had proved a success. He would have said also that it is a monarchical confederation consisting of thirty-one states, the chiefs of

which are almost all kings, princes, or electors. There are not more than four or five states which are not monarchical, and, nevertheless, that confederation works well.

MR. GEOFFRION—Are they sovereign states?

HON. SOL. GEN. LANGEVIN—Yes, but they have done what we are now about to do. In order to hold their own among the great powers, and not to be at the mercy of the first who might choose to assail their rights, they have united their strength because they conceived that "union is strength." When the honorable member for Lotbinière was talking about the weakness inherent in confederations, he ought to have recollected late events in Italy, as they happened a few years ago. He should have called to mind the conquests of Garibaldi, and reflected that if he had succeeded in overcoming a number of petty states and even the kingdom of Naples for the benefit of the king of Sardinia, it was because the Italian States, being divided as he found them, were too weak to resist an invasion, and that, had they been confederated, neither Garibaldi nor Victor Emmanuel would ever have succeeded in getting the upper hand of them. And what happened when the little states of Italy were banded together with Piedmont? This happened—when Garibaldi aimed at making conquests on his own account, he soon found out that the small states no longer existed, and that a large state had been formed out of their fragments, the consequence of which was that he was beaten at Aspromonte. The honorable member says that our connection with the Mother Country, under the Confederation, would be one of paper, and that the Upper Canadians would detest the Lower Canadians.

MR. GEOFFRION—He did not say that such things would be, but that such might be the effect of Confederation.

HON. SOL. GEN. LANGEVIN—Why should such be the effect of Confederation? No questions will be decided in the Federal Parliament but such as relate to general matters. Local matters will not be treated of, nor questions of race, of religion, or of institutions peculiar to the several provinces, and consequently there can be no collision of opinions on such questions. Such a fear, therefore, is quite unfounded. The honorable member says, moreover, that the Confederation would lead rather to divide than to unite us, that civil war would be the result, and that the Upper Canadians would rather be annexed to the United States than subjected to Lower