that sufficient is not given to his people, and in this case we do not know who, in the negotiations that went forward, represented the Roman Catholic people. If we are going to do justice we should be sure indeed that we have the right to do it. We may go abroad and see a quarrel between two persons on the street and we may actually know what is the right settlement between them, but it does not necessarily follow we are empowered to enforce that settlement. We must be sure not only that our settlement is just, but we must be also sure that we are the right authority to make that settlement. And when we consider that phase of the question it brings us up against a fact we must all realize: that there is a constitutional and a legal feature of this question that has to be settled before we determine whether a particular compromise is a fair and just one and should be enforced. We must know that we are properly empowered to make that compromise, to make that settlement and to pass an enactment legalizing it. Other questions such as the merits of the schools and the justice of the settlement may follow, I claim that it is not quibbling on a point of law to say that it is essential in this case to know that we should be first sure of our ground; that we should be first sure we are actually on the rock of the constitution before we undertake to pass a law of this kind.

It is not enough to say that the end will justify the means, that the settlement we believe is just, and therefore we will put it through in any case. I am not afraid to face the constitution lest it should give more to Roman Catholic minorities than the present Bill. To say to me that the Bill gives little to Roman Catholic minorities is not in itself a recommendation. I am not seeking to find how little I can give to the minority in this case, but I am urging on the government the desirability of ascertaining exactly what the constitution does give. If the constitution itself, according to the decision of the courts should give more to the minority than the present Bill gives why should we seek to deny that to them ? If it should be found that, owing to the special circumstances of the case the constitution did not apply, and that possibly nothing was given to the minority, then would be the time for us, or whatever body was properly constituted to consider what the merits and the justice of the case might demand.

What is this constitution, then, which I claim should govern in the case, and not merely our ideas of what is abstract justice? It is embodied in the British North America Acts from 1867 to 1886, and when one approaches that constitution at the present time, he finds the path very well worn indeed by those who have recently been there. Those old Acts have been awakened from their slumbers in the library, and have been brought forward at the most unexpected moments. And what do the seekers get ? Very often they simply get what they go to seek for, and they only bring away, I am afraid, what suits or pleases them. There is in them very much of what is definite for the provinces that entered into the confederation compact, but there is a lack of definiteness for territories which are to be made into provinces. As a layman approaches the constitution, the natural question he asks himself is what should be his attitude and what is his duty under such circumstances ? When he is brought face to face with legal and constitutional questions in this House, and when these questions have, as he believes, to be decided upon before he can proceed to decide on other or further steps, it is very natural that he should hesitate, that he should approach these questions with diffidence. He realizes that he is untrained in that class of work ; he realizes that he does not know the law, that he does not know where the law is, that he does not know whether he has the whole of the law or not when he reaches it. He knows that in all lines of work practice makes perfect, and he lacks practice. But he knows also that he has to make a decision of some kind ; he has either to make a decision of his own, or he has to entrust that decision to some one else; and if there is one fault more than another that has in this country been found with politicians, I think it is that instead of trying to decide for themselves, they have always allowed their party leaders to do the thinking for them. It may be that, with the greater wisdom and ability of that party leader, that is a wise course, but it is one that is open to reproach. However, while all that is true with regard to the laymen, it is also true that there are certain advantages that come to him in the consideration of such a question. It is usually conceded by the legal men that the ordinary layman has sufficient intelligence to grasp a legal point if it is properly explained to him ; and in this case we have not only the explanation, but we have a full and able debate from the legal men in this House. We have their views on every point argued out very carefully. We have not only the law supplied to us, but we have all the law. We do not need to ask, is there any more that is not quoted to us ? We find that these Acts are in the language which we speak. When we examine them, we find that they are not highly technical in their wording, and as we read we realize that there has been an intention to make them clear. In addition, there is the fact that we are forced to judge in the case, and, as far as the law will allow, to make a decision. We cannot depute that duty to any one else. I may also say, as an encouragement to any Liberal who chooses to think for himself in the case, that we have a good example before us. In the year 1896 the people of this country undertook in a wonderful manner the study