

ther by the closest ties, determined to aid and strengthen one another, and perpetuate the hallowed connection with our honored parent. If the mother country receives from us a pledge of earnestness in this matter, and believes that our great object is to keep up the connection with her, she will feel doubly bound to give renewed assurances for the continuance of that connection, and to sustain and protect us in the hour of need. She will feel that the colonies united in one great country will be a source of strength instead of weakness. If the colonies are consolidated—if they present a united population of millions of loyal subjects, England will feel a greater degree of security than she can possibly do while they remain mere isolated communities without unity of purpose or design.

We are told that it is unconstitutional to pass the Resolution before the house—that the question should be referred to the people at the polls, but where is the argument that has been adduced in support of this proposition? We are told that it is a terrible thing to take away the rights of the people. Do these gentlemen correctly estimate the position we occupy? Do they forget that we have certain responsibilities as forming a portion of the Empire of Great Britain? We have a constitution of our own, I admit, and have the right to manage our own local affairs. We had conceded to us years ago the principle of Responsible Government: but did we also obtain the right of exercising it against the rest of the Empire on a question involving Imperial as well as Inter-colonial interests? Are we to use it to the detriment of the mother-country and the sister-colonies? When Responsible Government was conceded to us, the principle of total independence did not accompany it.—We may pass an act here, but it must be ratified by the home government. We are dependent, and should where necessary, modify our views and measures to some extent when Imperial and inter-colonial interests are at stake. Whilst we are a dependency, we have the protection of the mother-country, and she can at the same time ask from us the yielding of certain rights as British subjects, for the benefit of the whole Empire. We are asked to—(Mr. Killam—To sell us)—the hon. member says to sell us; I would tell him that he would not ask a great deal to sell us to the United States tomorrow. (Cheers in the galleries.) I contend whenever overpowering interests of the empire demand it, the Imperial Government may fairly ask us to modify and amend our constitution, and that the representatives of the people can constitutionally consider and pass upon the subject. Let us then look calmly at the position we occupy. We are told that this matter should be submitted to the people. I would ask these gentlemen to give us examples where such a course has been pursued.—Have they cited one case? Not one. How was the constitution changed in New Zealand? By the Legislature first adopting the measures for Union, and subsequently by an Imperial act. I can understand why, if a resolution was moved for Annexation to the United States, some gentlemen would not see anything improper in it, but when we move one, under the authority of the British Government, with the view of joining the sister colonies, in order to give us strength and security, they prate about

the constitutionality of the proceeding. Suppose the British Parliament in the interests of the Empire should pass an Act for the consolidation of those Provinces, could the constitutional right of doing so be impugned? The British Government have not intimated a desire to pursue that course but no person can deny its right to adopt that course. All, however, that they have done is to manifest their desire that we should manage the affair in our own way, and to give us their opinion that it is for our own advantage that we should unite without delay. When gentlemen attempt to introduce a novel doctrine in this Legislature they should adduce some argument derived from the practice of other countries in support of their position. Can they show us an instance of a question after it has passed the Legislature, having been sent to the people? When a government introduces, but fails to carry, a measure, they can go to the country and test the public opinion. When a measure is proposed by a government and passed, the constitutional doctrine prevails that the gentlemen within these walls represent the feelings of their constituents. That must be the constitutional test, otherwise every measure of importance should be submitted to the people after its passage through the Legislature. We are told that the people are opposed to this scheme, but that has to be proved. The people are hardly yet aware of the exact nature of the resolution, and therefore cannot be said to be opposed to it. Some persons have objected to the Quebec scheme; some have favored a legislative union; others are in favour of a modification of the former measure. Various opinions prevail, but nearly all wish union of some shape or other. I hold that it is perfectly constitutional to pass this resolution—that we have an undoubted right to do so—gentlemen will remember that it is only a short time since that the Legislature of Jamaica passed an act to destroy its own constitution? Did these Anti-Confederate gentlemen come forward and declare that to be unconstitutional? Not at all.

We propose only to transfer certain powers to a Legislative body comprising a fair representation of our own, chosen on the principle of population. It is not a Confederation in the strict term of the word. It is a Legislative union to a large extent. The people will elect their representatives as they do now, and each country will have its member in the General Parliament. Objection has been taken to the principle of representation based on population, but what else can you have? We could not expect to have as large a representation as Canada, nor could Prince Edward Island ask as many representatives as Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, and if the numbers were not to be equal, I ask these gentlemen upon what principle would they be regulated except on that of population? What was the cause of the difficulties that have arisen between Upper and Lower Canada? It was because that principle was not incorporated in the Act of Union. After a few years Upper Canada, at first less than Lower Canada but subsequently largely increased in population, did not consider that it was fully represented, and demanded that its representation should be based on numbers. We are told that this is not a Legislative Union, because all the sub-