

from Lower Canada, and I found that, notwithstanding their opposition to the scheme of Confederation, which they were willing to do almost anything to defeat, they were still persistent in denying to Upper Canada a single shadow of a hope that her grievances would be redressed, if this scheme were rejected, by the granting of representation according to population. (Hear, hear.) Before coming here, too, I entertained the opinion that those honorable gentlemen from Upper Canada, who had fought so long and so uselessly for representation according to population, would join with me in endeavoring to get an amendment to the scheme before us adopted, giving us a Legislative instead of a Federal union. I soon found out, however, that there was little hope of getting such an amendment carried, because nine-tenths of them were determined to accept the scheme as it stood, simply because their leaders were in the Government. (Hear, hear.) My hon. friend the member for Shefford (Hon. Mr. HUNTINGTON), complains of this measure being forced upon the country; but if there is one hon. gentleman more than another chargeable with bringing about this state of affairs, it is that honorable gentleman. He once held a high and honorable position in the Government of this country. He is possessed of great ability, and being highly popular with his constituents, could well have afforded to have lent a helping hand to those who were desirous of having the union as it was work satisfactorily. I am satisfied that when he held the reins of power, if he was so anxious for the good-will, as well as for the reputation of the great Protestant and Reform party of Upper Canada, and so desirous of maintaining and protecting the rights which he now desires to have given to his friends, he would have used his power in the Government and his eloquence in the House to obtain even-handed justice for Upper Canada, and to relieve his friends in that portion of the province from the difficulties under which they labored. But, instead of doing that, he joined a Government that denied its members the privilege of voting for representation according to population—a Government that made it a close question, and which, instead of dealing with it as they ought to have done, or even giving us reason to hope well of the future, took such a course in relation to that great question as left a dark and dismal future before those who had been struggling for their rights on that question. As regards the position of that Government, after it was reconstructed, I believe I

am right in saying it was thoroughly understood that its members were not to vote for it.

HON. J. S. MACDONALD—No; they were to vote as they liked.

MR. FERGUSON—Well, whatever may have been their privileges, we all know that there was nothing done in the matter, although they might have seen that it would be better to come out honestly and say that even-handed justice should be done to both Upper and Lower Canada. As this was my impression, Mr. SPEAKER, and seeing that no change could be made in the Constitution that would benefit Upper Canada, I felt I had a duty to perform—I felt that if they would not give us a change in the mode we desired, it was not for me to say that I would play the part of the dog in the manger. I feel it would be better to have almost any scheme, than to endure the difficulties we had labored under for so many years past; and I told the honorable gentlemen from Lower Canada that if that were the course they were to pursue, they would change my mind to a considerable extent. Another thing which had a peculiar effect on my mind, was the report of Col. JERVOIS on the defences of our country. It is impossible for me to deny that the speeches which have been made in the English Parliament, expressive of a want of sympathy with the Canadian people, and of a desire to get rid of Canada, have not been pleasant to me; and although I think I have a loyal heart, and am bound by powerful obligations to maintain British supremacy, I find it hard that English statesmen should express a willingness to shake us off and leave us in the power of a foreign nation. (Hear, hear.) But Col. JERVOIS was sent out to ascertain what defences were necessary, and what could be done to defend this country if at an unfortunate moment a difficulty might arise. When I see that his report declares that we have a difficult country to defend—that it would take a large number of men to put us into a condition to defend ourselves—and when I see that the British Government, true to its real instincts, is resolved to aid us in our defence—this, I say, has a great effect upon my mind, and makes me think it would not be my duty, under the circumstances, to refuse assent to the Government measure at a moment when I feel that the lives and property of my constituents, 30,000 in number, are open to an attack at any time from the powerful armies a foreign people might choose to bring up against them. (Hear.) The scheme seems to me to be an expensive and trouble-