

rial Government. One hon. gentlemen, to whom I have particular reference (Hon. JOSEPH HOWE) declared it was unreasonable to expect that we should defend ourselves against a foreign power, when we had no voice either in the declaring of war or the making of peace—that while we were quite ready, as in times past, to expose our persons and property to meet the invader at the threshold of our country, we were unwilling to take upon ourselves, as colonists, a duty which belonged to the parent state. But does this correspond with the views that are now adopted by the Ministry of the day? I hold in my hand an extract from a speech delivered by one of the most prominent members of the Government at a recent banquet in the city of Toronto. And what did that hon. gentleman say? Speaking of the Conference at Quebec, he stated that “the delegates unanimously resolved that the United Provinces of British North America shall be placed at the earliest moment in a thorough state of defence.” Hon. gentlemen, I was not aware that the Imperial Government had ever cast off the burden of the defence of this province. But we are told by an hon. gentleman, high in the Executive, that this Conference, self-appointed as it was, by a resolution that we do not see laid upon the table, promised to place the province in a thorough state of defence. Hon. gentlemen, what does that mean? It means an expenditure here of four or five millions of dollars annually, or else the statement exceeded the truth. Again the hon. gentleman stated:—“The Conference at Quebec did not separate before entering into a pledge to put the military and naval defences of the united provinces in the most complete and satisfactory position.” Before we discuss this scheme further—before we are called on to give a vote upon it—I say we ought to know something more with reference to this important matter. (Hear, hear). Hon. gentlemen may perhaps argue that there is no necessity for this question going to the people—no necessity for further time being allowed to the people of Upper Canada or of Canada generally to consider this matter. Why, hon. gentlemen, has it not been stated by every hon. member who has taken the floor to address the House on this question, that it is the most important question ever submitted to this or any other British Colonial Legislature? And yet many of those hon. members are unwilling

that the people of this country should have any further time to consider this important matter—although, by the laws of our land, no municipality has a right to enact or pass a by-law creating a little petty debt, not to be paid off within a year, without submitting it first to the vote of the people. (Hear.) Hon. gentlemen assign as a reason why the matter should not be submitted to the people—that we have had a number of elections to this House since it was known that the scheme of Confederation was under the consideration of the Government, and that these elections went favorably to the scheme. I would ask, hon. gentlemen, how many elections have we had in Upper Canada since the scheme was printed and laid before the people? I would like to see the hon. gentleman stand up, who has been elected to come here to vote upon this scheme since it was submitted to the people. It is true we have had one election in Upper Canada since that time—my hon. friend near me (Hon. Mr. SIMPSON) alluded to it yesterday—the election in South Ontario, a constituency until recently represented by one of the hon. gentlemen who entered the Ministry which brings this scheme before us—our present esteemed Vice-Chancellor of Upper Canada, Hon. Mr. MOWAT. What did the candidates say at that election? Both of them, as stated by my honorable friend, in asking the suffrages of the people, had to promise that, if elected to Parliament, they would vote for a submission of this scheme to the people. (Hear, hear.) And that is the last election we have had in Upper Canada. It is true that many honorable gentlemen now present, in their addresses to their several constituencies, when seeking election last fall, said they were in favor of a union of the British North American Provinces. But, hon. gentlemen, there is not a man in this chamber, within the sound of my voice, who would not say the same. I am myself as much in favor of Confederation to-day as ever I was in my life; and I will challenge any one to say that at any time, on any public occasion, I ever said aught against the scheme of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces. (Hear, hear.) But, honorable gentlemen, when I look at this scheme, imperfect as I conceive it to be, it receives my opposition, not because it is a scheme for the Confederation of British North America, but because it is a scheme containing within itself the germs of its