

state of things in the United States, which has resulted from carrying the elective principle too far; and the fact that that principle, carried too far has worked much mischief, ought to place us on our guard. Some years ago, in Canada, there was quite a rage for the elective principle, and an agitation was got up with the view of rendering the judiciary elective. Well, a statesman of the United States, with whom I am well acquainted, and who now occupies a high position in that country, once remarked to me: "You have quite enough of the democratic element in your Constitution already, and, above all, do not make your judiciary elective, for that would be one of the greatest curses you could inflict on your country." (Hear, hear.) The elective principle, kept within proper bounds, is very good indeed, and hitherto, no doubt, has worked well in this House. But I doubt whether, in the course of time, this House would not lose its present high *status* if the elective principle was continued in it for ever. As regards this, however, I merely state my own opinion, and other honorable gentlemen may hold contrary opinions, as they are perfectly entitled to do. (Hear, hear.) Having thus, honorable gentlemen, explained the reasons which induced the Government, in 1856, to propose that the elective principle should be extended to this House, with the concomitant circumstances which assisted in bringing that about—and having also explained the reasons which have induced the Government now to look for another state of political existence, as we may call it, by Confederation with the Maritime Provinces, I think I am clear from any imputation of inconsistency or levity of purpose. Before sitting down I have a personal explanation to make. When I speak, honorable gentlemen, I speak with sincerity, but, like any other man, I may commit a mistake. The moment, however, that I find I have committed a mistake, I am ready to admit it, as any honest man should do. (Hear, hear.) I find that I took a wrong view of the proportions of appointed members that were to be allotted to each province, in case the amendment of my honorable friend from the Wellington Division should pass. I have since been convinced that I was wrong, and that it was really carrying out the principle of distribution adopted in the scheme, to allot to the Lower Provinces other ten members. I am glad to admit that my honorable friend was right in correcting me. But I still maintain that he was wrong—very wrong—in bartering old men

for young ones, because, no doubt, the old men would soon disappear from their seats, while the young men from below would long retain their places, and we would thus destroy the equilibrium upon which the whole fabric of the proposed Constitution is based. I say the honorable gentleman was wrong in that, and that, if his proposal were adopted, it would certainly be no improvement on the scheme as it has come from the Conference. (Cheers.)

HON. MR. SKEAD said—Honorable gentlemen, I claim the indulgence of the House for a few moments while I state from my point of view, as one of the representatives from Central Canada, the way in which I regard the measure now under consideration. I am an advocate of the union of the British North American Provinces. (Hear, hear.) When I came here a few weeks ago, my mind was scarcely made up as to the course I should pursue. At the same time I was desirous of taking that course which should be approved by the majority of my constituents. In November last I received the document which was sent to members of both Houses throughout the province; but as it was marked "Private," I felt bound by every consideration of propriety not to make it public. Having at that time been re-elected by my constituents, I had no occasion to use it in connection with securing my return to this House. But, speaking of my reelection a few months ago, I may remark that a number of my constituents felt disposed at that time to pledge me to oppose this union of the British North American colonies. For my own part I felt it would be wrong for me to do so, not knowing what was the programme that was about to be laid; I refused, therefore, to give a pledge. Probably I felt more independent on account of there being no opposition. (Laughter.) But be that as it may, I have the same desire to act in accordance with the deliberate views of my constituents as if I had canvassed every vote in the division. I pledged myself on the hustings on the day of my election, that as soon as the scheme was published I would give it my earnest attention, and form a judgment upon it to the best of my ability. After the document was formally laid on the table of the House, I waited till it was put in type, and having ordered two thousand copies of it, I sent them, some fifteen days ago, to my constituents, with a circular calling upon them to state any objections they might have to the scheme if they considered it objectionable, and to indicate what