

of one or the other minority, or of both. It is difficult to conceive one single legislature composed of two majorities and two minorities; these two majorities without any identity of principle, acting nevertheless together by common consent, so as to never trespass the one on the other, and so that each section of the province would always be governed by a majority of its representatives. On many questions this course could not be carried out without alternately forcing the majority of the representatives of each section of the province to abstain from voting, or to declare themselves in favor of measures which their judgment and their conscience would disavow. The complications of such a system amounting to nothing short of an application of the Federal principle to a single legislature, would render it impracticable.

Then the honorable member had changed his opinion on this subject! I do not say this as a reproach; but it proves that he always acted with the same object in view—that is to say, to stifle the cry for representation based on population. How, then, does it happen that he finds fault with the present Ministry for bringing forward a measure to put an end to these difficulties, and to prevent our being placed in a position of inferiority? But the object of the Confederation is not merely to do away with existing difficulties. It has become a necessity, because we have become sufficiently great,—because we have become strong, rich, and powerful enough,—because our products are numerous enough and considerable enough,—because our population has become large enough to allow of our aspiring to another position, and of our seeking to obtain an outlet through some seaport for our products. At the present day we stand in a position of vassalage to the United States, with respect to the exportation of our products to Europe; we are at their mercy. If we should have any difficulty with our neighbors to-morrow, they would close the Portland route to us, and we should find ourselves, during nearly seven months in the year, cut off from all communication with the seaboard, save by means of the usual long and difficult land journey. This is not a tenable position, nor one worthy of a people such as that which inhabits the Provinces of British North America. It is a position which must be emerged from, for such is the interest of Canada, of the Lower Provinces, and of the Western States. The honorable member for Hochelaga told us that he was in favor of a plan which would settle existing difficulties, and would place Lower Canada in a suitable position; but he never told us what that plan was. The only thing he ever proposed was his plan of 1859 for

the Confederation of the two Canadas; but that plan would only have settled one difficulty, and would have allowed others of the greatest importance to arise—and among others, that respecting our communication with the seaboard. That plan, for instance, would not have allowed us to construct the Intercolonial Railway; for it is almost impossible that so great an enterprise should succeed unless it is in the hands of a great central power, and if it is necessary to consult five or six governments before commencing it. But the question of the Confederation of the two Canadas is not the only one which is presented as a means of escaping from our difficulties; there are different plans which I shall enumerate. Some propose, for instance, that we should remain in the position in which we now are; others wish for annexation to the United States; some would, perhaps, be in favor of complete independence; others would favor a Confederation of the two Canadas; and, lastly, the Confederation of all the British North American Provinces is proposed. Well, let us cursorily examine these various propositions. It may be that there are some members who are desirous that we should remain as we are. The honorable members for Hochelaga and Lotbinière (Hon. Mr. DORION and Mr. JOLY) consider our position an excellent one, and so, in their speeches, they have told us. They consider that we are extremely prosperous, and that we have nothing to wish for. For my part, I consider that in our present position we are under a great disadvantage; it is that if we remain isolated and alone, we cannot communicate with the metropolis, except through the United States; if we remain alone we can aspire to no position, we can give rein to no ambition as a people. Again, we have at the present time as many systems of judicature as we have provinces; with Confederation, on the contrary, this defect will be removed, and there will be but two systems: one for Lower Canada, because our laws are different from those of the other provinces, because we are a separate people, and because we do not choose to have the laws of the other populations—and the other for the remainder of the Confederation. All the other provinces having the same laws, or their system of law being derived from one and the same source, may have one and the same system of judicature; and, in fact, a resolution of the Conference allows them to resolve that they will have one code and one