

men? Situated at a distance of a thousand leagues from us, Great Britain, with all her material of war and our militia, could not defend Canada against so powerful an enemy, except at the cost of the greatest sacrifices. It is not, therefore, at a time when we are placed in such great straits, that we should exclaim loudly that we do not fear the struggle, and that we are ready to measure our strength against that of the States of the American Union. It is equally absurd to give umbrage to their institutions by creating beside them a political organization to which they are fundamentally opposed. Is it believed that our monarchical pretensions and our threats are of a nature to intimidate the American statesmen? In their eyes we are but pigmies hurling threats at giants. Let the war come with the Constitution as it is, and we shall find a hundred thousand volunteers ready to defend our frontier. But if the Government impose on the French-Canadians the scheme of Confederation, from which they have so much fear, and which may prove to be productive of the most disastrous consequences to their institutions, their language and their laws, then, I am bound to say, there will be hesitation in our ranks at the time when every man will be marching towards almost certain death for the defence of a flag which will no longer confer upon our race the guarantees of protection which it to-day secures to us. I say, then, that the time is ill-chosen to make such serious changes, and to lay the foundation of an Empire the existence of which, threatened both from the interior and from the exterior, will be of but a few days' duration. For with dissatisfaction among the French-Canadians, deprived of their rights and privileges, it is impossible for England to maintain her power here against three hundred thousand men invading our territory at ten different points along our frontier. The wisest policy which we can pursue, at this critical moment, is therefore remain peaceable; spectators of the struggle between our neighbors, to open our forests to colonization, to turn to account our mines and water-powers, to clear our wild lands, and to labor without ceasing to to recall our unfortunate countrymen who are now scattered over American soil. Let us construct railways, let us double our manufacturing industry, let us enlarge our canals, let us extend our network of railways to the Maritime Provinces; and when we have attained great proportions as a peo-

ple, when our prosperity shall have increased fivefold, and, above all, when the terrible hurricane which threatens to destroy everything in North America shall have terminated its work of ruin, and finally when we shall be strong enough to protect ourselves from external attacks, and the French-Canadians especially shall have obtained sufficient power to have nearly equality of representation in the General Parliament, it will be time enough to lay the foundation of a great Confederation of the British North American Provinces, based on the protective principle of the sovereignty of the states. Under these circumstances Confederation will produce abundant fruits, and will be welcomed by the people of this country, and especially by the French-Canadians, who, having doubled in number in the interval, will be in a position to demand infinitely more advantageous conditions than those which are forced upon them to-day. We shall not then have our present political rights, which were so dearly obtained by the struggles of a century, replaced by local governments, which will be nothing more than municipal councils, vested with small and absurd powers, unworthy of a free people, which allow us at most the control of our roads, our schools and our lands; but we shall then obtain local governments based on the sovereignty of states, as is the case under the Constitution of the United States. The fact is not to be denied: the American Constitution was created by great men in face of a crowd of considerable and opposite local interests, and it cost them several years of deep study to reconcile those various interests, and finally to build up that admirable Constitution which, as the hon. member for Brome has so well said, defies the most severe criticism in relation to its most important bases. With a Constitution like that of the United States, based upon state sovereignty, Lower Canada would elect her own governor and her representatives in the Federal Parliament and Legislative Council, and also all the Executive Ministers.

MR. DUFRESNE (Montcalm) — We should also appoint the judges.

MR. PERRAULT — If the hon. member for Montcalm had listened attentively to the remarkable speech of the hon. member for Brome, he would have learned that in the majority of the states composing the American Union, the judges are not ap-