

HON. MR. DORION—I hear a voice, sir, which is well known in this House, the voice of the Attorney General West, saying “hear, hear.” But what was the course of that hon. gentleman last year, when the hon. member for South Oxford had a committee appointed to whom was referred the despatch written by his three colleagues, the Minister of Finance, the Attorney General East and the Hon. Mr. Ross, who is now no longer a minister. He voted against the appointment of the committee, and, after it was named, as a member of it, he voted against the principle of Confederation. (Hear, hear.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—Hear, hear.

HON. MR. DORION—The last vote taken in that committee was about the middle of June, the very day of the crisis, and the hon. gentleman voted against the principle of Confederation of all the provinces, in accordance with the opinions he again and again expressed in this House, as being opposed to all Confederation whatever. (Hear.) When I state that these gentlemen only found out that Confederation was a panacea for all evils, a remedy for all ills, when their seats as ministers were in danger, I come to this conclusion quite legitimately, from facts which are well known to this House. (Hear, hear.) But, sir, it would probably be of very little moment whether I was formerly in favor of Confederation or against it, or whether the Hon. Attorney General West was in favor of Confederation or opposed to it, if the scheme proposed to us were an equitable one, or one calculated to meet the wishes of the people of this country; but, as I said a minute ago, the scheme was not called for by any considerable proportion of the population. It is not laid before the House as one which was demanded by any number of the people; it is not brought down in response to any call from the people; it is a device of men who are in difficulties, for the purpose of getting out of them. (Hear, hear.) The members of the TACHÉ-MACDONALD Government could not appeal to the country after their defeat upon the question, whether they were justified in taking \$100,000 out of the public chest, in addition to the millions they had previously taken, without the consent of Parliament; so, having either to give up their seats or evade that particular issue, they abandoned all their previous opinions, and joined the hon. member for South Oxford in carrying out this Confederation scheme.

(Hear.) I come now to another point, viz., is the scheme presented to us the same one that was promised to us by the Administration when it was formed? This, sir, might be but of slight importance if the manner in which this proposed Constitution was framed had not a most unfortunate bearing on the scheme itself; but it is a grave matter, since the scheme is so objectionable, especially as we are gravely told that it cannot be amended in the least, but that it is brought down as a compact made between the Government of this country and delegates from the governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island—as a treaty which cannot be altered or amended in any particular. (Hear.) The plain meaning of this is, sir, that the Lower Provinces have made out a Constitution for us and we are to adopt it. This fact will appear the more clearly when it is considered, as was pointed out much to my surprise, by the hon. member for Hastings (Mr. T. C. WALLBRIDGE), that in the Conference the vote was taken by provinces, putting Upper and Lower Canada, with nearly 2,500,000 people, on no higher level than Prince Edward Island, with its 80,000—on the same level with New Brunswick, with its 250,000—on the same level as Nova Scotia, with its 330,000.

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—That is entirely a mistake.

HON. MR. DORION—It was admitted by the Honorable the President of the Council the other evening.

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—No, no!

HON. MR. DORION—It was the champion of representation by population who made the statement. He it was that went to Prince Edward Island and asked it to frame a Constitution for this country. (Hear and laughter.) In order to shew, Mr. SPEAKER, that I am not mistaken in what I state, that this scheme is not the one which it was announced in the formation of this Administration was to be brought down—in order to prove, indeed, that it was then determined not to bring down such a measure,—I will cite a declaration made by members of the Government as to the negotiations which took place at its formation. I will read from the *Quebec Morning Chronicle* of June 23rd :—

The Hon. Atty. Gen. MACDONALD, in explaining the negotiations, read the following memorandum :