

be without mutual advantage. It would give the inhabitants of each province the opportunity of studying each other's habits and pursuits, and so induce larger and more comprehensive views. He was prepared to admit that the assimilation of tariffs would be an advantage of no little moment, and that it would do away with much chafing in working the machinery of the government. He also admitted the advantage of having ocean sea-ports of our own, though he was not prepared to attach so much importance to that as some other honorable members. We were told that no inland country could ever be great, and that so long as we had no opening to the sea we could not expect permanent prosperity. He was quite prepared to say that access to the ocean through the ports of St. John, N.B., and Halifax, was very desirable, but he was not at all certain that the grand effects proclaimed would be realized. It was no doubt very desirable to secure all these advantages, but the measure contained some provisions which, if carried out, would, as he believed, be highly injurious to both the general and local governments. Then he must say he had a strong distrust of it on account of the manner in which it was originated. It was not in accordance with the analogy of things or with the lessons taught us by the history of the world, that a few gentlemen, however wise and well-intentioned, but self-elected, should meet together to form a constitution and erect a new nationality. If we looked to the United States (the history of whose Constitution he would presently allude to, and whose Constitution had been more closely followed in that now under consideration than the British Constitution) we would see how patiently they had proceeded to construct it. [Here the honorable member gave a history of the first instrument of federation, established for mutual convenience and support, though not for national union, which occupied from the 7th October to the 15th November, 1777, in the discussing. He then said that this arrangement, not being found to answer the requirements of the States concerned, in September, 1787, they commenced deliberating upon the adoption of a Constitution, which, after being arranged, was for two years before the individual states and the people, being only ratified in October, 1789.] This showed how careful and particular they had been in this important matter, and a distinguished member of the other branch of our legislature had said, only a few evenings ago, that the greatest statesmen who ever lived had been engaged in the work. From the length of the

discussions, and the time given to the people to study and understand the measure, it was seen how anxious they were that it should be made perfectly satisfactory to them. But what was it that gave rise to the desire for federation first in the States? They were poor and comparatively helpless. They had just come out of an exhaustive war with Great Britain, and the duty fell upon them of organizing a government for a broad expanse of country, containing but two and a half or three million souls. This it was that led to the first attempt at federation, and afterwards to a closer union under the constitution of 1789. How was it with us? It was alleged that we had been led step by step, according to the strictest method of induction, to the necessity for the measure now proposed; that without it there must have been an irremediable dead-lock between the parties in the legislature, which would have rendered further progress impossible. But what was the real impediment? Want of patriotism—not the want of a good Constitution. If there had been less virulence of party spirit, and a better disposition to accommodate matters, there would have been no dead-lock. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. ROSS hoped the honorable member felt this.

HON. MR. SANBORN—If the leading men had felt as they ought to have felt, there would have been no dead-lock, for it existed more in name than in reality. There was no cause for saying that no government could be formed which could command a good majority. And what had the difficulties arisen from? From a persistent agitation for representation according to population, in consequence of which the people had at last come to believe that it was a fundamental axiom in government. (Hear, hear.) But did it follow that because there were difficulties that they could not be arranged without recourse to such a measure as this, and was it certain even that Confederation would remove them? Instead of meeting the difficulties, the Government had travelled away from them and formed an agreement with provinces in which they had no existence, without devising means to relieve themselves. Federation was forthwith produced, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter, fully armed and we were told it was just what we wanted to make all things right. We were told we must take it as presented, without any possible change; we must lay aside our character as a deliberative body, and without considering the country (which had been studiously kept in ignorance of the scheme) vote to accept or