

this province before the Imperial Government is asked to legislate on the Address of this House. Now, the object of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Chateauguay is to ask that the Constitution adopted in England may not go into force until it shall have been submitted to the Legislature of this province, after the next general election, and until an Address shall have been adopted, asking that it be put in force. We ask the Imperial Government to-day, by the Address which has just been adopted, to submit to the Imperial Legislature an act for the Confederation of the British North American Provinces. If, in place of Confederation, the Imperial Parliament were to establish a legislative union of the provinces, I ask those honorable members of this House who protest against a legislative union, how they are to present themselves before their electors—after having refused to consult them—if they also refuse to declare that they desire to consider the measure again when it is brought back to us, after passing the Imperial Parliament? All we ask by this motion is that the act which is to be passed may be submitted to our Legislature, and ratified and approved by this House, before it is definitely put in force—in short, we ask to be allowed to refuse the new Constitution if it should not suit us. We must not forget what occurred in 1856, when we asked the Imperial Parliament to change the constitution of the Legislative Council, and to render it elective. Let it not be forgotten that they gave us a measure different from that we had asked for. We were, it is true, empowered to render the Legislative Council elective, but, at the same time, a clause was struck out of the Act of Union, which clause declared that the basis of the representation in the Legislative Assembly could not be changed without the concurrence of two-thirds of the members of the Legislature. And with that fact staring us in the face, what assurance have we to-day that the Imperial Government will not give us a legislative union, with representation based upon population, in place of a Confederation? What is to prevent them from changing the clause relative to the Legislative Council, and applying to it also the principle of representation based upon population? (Hear, hear.) Well, it is with a view of avoiding the possibility of any change of that nature that we now propose this amendment. There are many hon. members of this House who fear that in view of the refusal of the Maritime Provinces to assent to this scheme, England may

give us a Confederation of the two Canadas. And I ask—when we find the Ministry telling us, over and over again, that it is absolutely necessary to effect a constitutional change, that the matter is urgent, that even one week's delay cannot be given, nor the time to discuss the amendments we desire to propose to the scheme; that they must have a measure at once, otherwise the most dreadful evils must ensue—I ask, is it to be fancied, for one moment, that the Imperial Government will consent to force the Lower Provinces into Confederation. And what is to prevent that Government from changing the scheme so as to make it applicable to the two Canadas alone? (Hear, hear.) Here is what will happen, or at all events what may very well happen: when our Ministers reach England, and urge upon the Imperial Government the necessity for a change in the Constitution as regards Canada, that Government, seeing that the Lower Provinces do not desire Confederation, will pass a measure for the Confederation of the two provinces, leaving to the Maritime Provinces the right to enter that Confederation whenever they think proper. That is very possible, and the only way to provide against such a contingency is to address Her Majesty, praying that any Imperial measure, relating to constitutional changes, may not take effect until it shall have been submitted to, and shall have received the ratification of, the Legislature of Canada. (Hear, hear.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. CARTIER — Mr. SPEAKER, in reply to what the honorable member for Hochelaga has just said, I shall merely tell honorable members of this House that they need not take alarm at the apprehensions and predictions of that honorable gentleman. I have already declared in my own name, and on behalf of the Government, that the delegates who go to England will accept from the Imperial Government no act but one based on the resolutions adopted by this House, and they will not bring back any other. (Hear, hear.) I have pledged my word of honor and that of the Government to that effect, and I trust that my word of honor will have at least as much weight with this House and the country as the apprehensions of the honorable member for Hochelaga. (Cheers.)

MR. MACFARLANE—Mr. SPEAKER, I had intended giving the reasons for the course I was taking prior to the last vote, and as I still desire to explain, the honorable member for Chateauguay has given me an opportunity