

treaty, and that it is also unfair that the Ministry should refuse us all explanations on this point, before we are called upon to give our votes on the resolutions. (Hear.) The Hon. Solicitor General East told us the other day that in the plan of Confederation which I had proposed for the two Canadas, I intended to leave the administration and ownership of the Crown lands to the General Government, and he said that under Confederation the Crown lands would belong to the local governments, and this, in his opinion, was a great improvement on the plan which I proposed. Well, it must be observed that a very large amount is due on sales of Crown lands; there is about \$1,000,000 due in Lower Canada, and \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000 in Upper Canada. If these lands had remained in the union there would have been about one million from Lower Canada, and five or six millions from Upper Canada towards the payment of the general debt. We should have benefited to that amount by the extinction of so much of the public debt; instead of that, under the plan of the Government, Upper Canada is to have the benefit of the five or six millions due on the lands sold in Upper Canada, whilst Lower Canada will only have one million of dollars at the outside. If it were only the public lands, there would be no injustice in leaving them to the local governments, but the difference in the amounts due on the lands sold gives a considerable advantage to Upper Canada. There is another very serious objection to the Constitution of the Legislative Council. The honorable member for Montmorency said that the Legislative Council would serve as a protection and safeguard to the interests of the French-Canadians, because in it we would have an equality of members with the other provinces. A curious equality that will be! That of which the honorable member for Montmorency spoke when he pronounced himself in favor of two elective chambers, because in that case we should have one member in three, was infinitely preferable. In the Lower House we shall not have one member in three, nor shall we in the Upper House either, for we shall only have twenty-four councillors out of seventy-six. Thus we shall have equality neither in the Lower House nor in the Council. (Hear, hear.) But then the General Government will nominate the councillors, and we shall be in a great minority in the Executive Council. Another objection is that the nomination of the legislative councillors on the recommendation of the Executive Coun-

cil of the General Government, and this offers no guarantee for the institutions of Lower Canada, because the predominating influence in that Council will not be that of the majority of Lower Canada. To offer an effectual guarantee, it would be necessary that they should be elected by the people, or, at all events, only appointed on the recommendation of the local governments. These resolutions, we are told, are only as it were the headings to the chapters of the new Constitution, and the new Constitution may be anything else than what is now under consideration. It will come back to us in the form of an Imperial Act, to which we shall have *volentes volentes* to submit. (Hear, hear.) Supposing even that the scheme should not be modified, I could not approve it. I cannot with a joyful heart give up the imprescriptible rights of the people who have sent me here to represent them. I cannot consent to a change which is neither more nor less than a revolution, a political revolution it is true, but which does not the less, on that account, affect the rights and interests of a million of inhabitants, the descendants of the first settlers in America, of those who have given their names to the vast regions which they discovered, and whose careers have been rendered famous by so many heroic traits. (Hear, hear.) I am opposed to this Confederation in which the militia, the appointment of the judges, the administration of justice and our most important civil rights, will be under the control of a General Government the majority of which will be hostile to Lower Canada, of a General Government invested with the most ample powers, whilst the powers of the local governments will be restricted, first, by the limitation of the powers delegated to it, by the *veto* reserved to the central authority, and further, by the concurrent jurisdiction of the general authority or government. Petitions, with more than 20,000 signatures attached to them, have already been presented to this House against the scheme of Confederation. Numerous public meetings have been held in nineteen counties in Lower Canada, and one in the city of Montreal. Everywhere this scheme has been protested against, and an appeal to the people demanded; and yet, in defiance of the expressed opinions of our constituents, we are about to give them a Constitution, the effect of which will be to snatch from them the little influence which they still enjoy under the existing union. We are about, on their behalf, to surrender all the rights and