

cede to the Lower Provinces. (Hear, hear.) Another of the delegates to the Quebec Conference, Hon. Mr. WHELAN, of Prince Edward Island, enumerates all the advantages that will be secured to that province by Confederation, and winds up by saying, that that little island will have \$40,000 a year more than necessary to carry on its local affairs. (Hear.) Taking all these circumstances into consideration, I do think the Government ought to have given more time to deliberate upon and perfect this measure; and, at any rate, to leave it over till another session of Parliament before demanding a final decision upon the question. Failing to do that, and failing to consent to any alteration in any one of the resolutions, however objectionable, I think it is our duty to refer it to the people for their decision upon it. I know I will be met with the objection that this is contrary to British practice—that a reference to the people in the manner I propose is unknown to the British Constitution. We may say the same thing in regard to every branch of legislation and public business in this country, that it differs in some respects from the mode of conducting it which prevails in England; but we must remember that we are differently situated in this country from the people of England, and that our feelings and habits of thought upon public affairs are altogether different. And since we have adopted the principle in the conduct of our municipal affairs, to refer all matters involving the expenditure of money for special purposes to the people, it will do no possible harm to apply it to this measure; and if the people adopt it, and it should afterwards prove that they had entered into a bad bargain, they would have no one to blame but themselves, and I have no doubt would, under such circumstances, bear it more patiently. But if we take the opposite course, if we close this arrangement on terms disadvantageous to us, it will be many years before a change can be effected. Would Prince Edward Island, at the demand of Canada, give up the lien, the constitutional right she will have obtained under this scheme, to the money she receives over and above what is necessary to meet her local requirements? Not at all. Would Newfoundland give up her bonus of \$160,000 a year for all time, should the looked for coal not be found to pay? Not a bit of it. Would Nova Scotia give up her right to impose an export duty on coals and other minerals, because Canada found that this right gave her undue advan-

tages? Certainly not. Would New Brunswick surrender her right to levy an export duty on timber, or, at the call of Canada, give any extra assistance towards the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, which will benefit her far more largely than any of the other provinces, inasmuch as it will open up a large tract of country within her borders, and render the land and timber it contains far more valuable? Undoubtedly she would not; we would have to abide by our agreement, no matter how invidious might be the advantages it conferred, no matter how unfavorably it might affect western interests. (Hear, hear.) The complaint that has been made against the working of the present union is that in Lower Canada the people do not pay as much in taxes to the general revenue, man for man, as the people of Upper Canada. It was contended, I believe, by the present Attorney General East, at a speech delivered some years since to his constituents at Verchères, that the expenditure for the redemption of seigniorial rights did not affect Lower Canada very much, because Upper Canada paid two-thirds of the revenue of the country; and all the advocates of the western section, who have urged its rights before the people, have taken the ground that it contributed in that proportion to the public exchequer. Now, if there be any truth in this statement, it must follow that under this arrangement Canada, at all events, will have to pay more, man for man, than the eastern provinces to the general revenue, because it cannot be contended, I apprehend, that Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, or either of the other Maritime Provinces, however prosperous their condition may be, have a population as wealthy as that of Upper Canada, or one that will contribute as much in taxes to the General Government. If then, during the past, Lower Canada has paid less than Upper Canada to the revenue, while enjoying the benefit of as large or perhaps a larger expenditure than that section, what is proposed to be done now? Why, to remove that difficulty which led almost to a dead-lock in our legislation, to get rid of the embarrassments that have beset the Government of this country for many years past, we are asked to adopt a scheme that will perpetuate them on a larger scale than before, and involve, in the construction of the Intercolonial Railway alone, the expenditure of a million or a million and a half annually for ever. (Hear, hear.) How absurd then to urge on this scheme without at least sharing the responsibility of it with the