

individual member of this Honorable House for the course which he may adopt. I quite concur with honorable gentlemen that the present juncture in our affairs is big with the future destiny of our country, and that our fate for weal or woe depends upon the course we shall now pursue, and I, for one, feel not the slightest desire to shift one single atom of the burthen of that responsibility from my shoulders. I am fully prepared to assume it at once upon the merits of the scheme as it is evolved in these resolutions, and I do not wish to shield myself behind either an adjournment, such as has been proposed by my honorable friend the member for the division of King, and which, I am glad to say, has just been rejected by an unmistakable vote of this House, or the larger motion, of which my honorable friend from Niagara has given notice, for an appeal to the people, and to which I shall presently again refer. An objection has been taken *in limine* by the honorable member from Niagara to the constitution of the Conference which sat at Quebec, that they were, in the first place, self-appointed; and, in the second place, that the great principle of representation based upon population was not carried out, because although the Lower Provinces possessed each, and even collectively, a much smaller population than Canada, yet they had a much larger number of members in the Congress than we had. As to the first objection, of their being self-appointed or self-constituted, some one had to take the initiative in the matter, and no one had better authority than the different governments to say who should represent their respective provinces in the Conference. Will honorable gentlemen contend that the delegates were self-appointed when they were appointed by the Ministry of the day, who are responsible to the Legislative Assembly, which, in its turn, is responsible to the people at large? Then, as to the second objection, that the numbers were unequal, the honorable gentleman ought to know that the principle of representation by population does not apply to the Conference in the same way that it does to the representation in this and the other House of Parliament. Here the vote of every individual member counts upon a division on any question, and so numbers become of the utmost importance. But in the Conference the votes were counted by provinces, and not by single votes, so that it was impossible that any one province could be swamped by the others by reason of their having a larger representation. The only effect of an undue

representation from any province would be to increase the difficulty the delegates from that one would have in agreeing among themselves to any single proposition, or to the propositions as a whole, and it could not, in any way, work any injustice to the other provinces. I have no doubt the Conference found their greatest difficulty in bringing the members of each section to agree among themselves. (Hear, hear, from the Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL.) If the delegates from any province felt that they could not agree to any of the questions submitted to them, they had but to say so, and the scheme of Confederation, so far as they were concerned, would have been at an end. The argument of unfair representation is, therefore, quite fallacious. There could really be no danger from the number of representatives not being in proportion, so long as each province had the power of protecting itself from any injustice which might be attempted to be perpetrated against it by the others. (Hear, hear.) It has also been objected that the present Canadian Administration was formed upon the avowed policy of forming a Federal union between Upper and Lower Canada only, and that the Government has exceeded their constitutional powers by substituting an union of all the provinces instead of what they had promised. Do we not all remember that the avowed policy of the Government was a Federal union of these provinces, I mean Upper and Lower Canada first, leaving it open to the Maritime Provinces and the colonies of the great west to fall into the union whenever they might find it their interest to do so? Ministers, no doubt, had not the slightest idea that the larger scheme could be accomplished as soon if not sooner than the smaller one. I told my constituents, on coming before them for re-election, that there was an urgent necessity for a different union between Upper and Lower Canada from that which now exists, and that there was not time to include the Lower Provinces in the first scheme. But the movement has outrun my expectation, and I believe that of every member of the House. And is the House to reject the larger scheme when it is the easiest of accomplishment, simply because it had a secondary place in the ministerial programme? I think the Charlottetown Conference was a good opportunity, and that the Government has acted wisely in putting themselves in communication with it, and in taking up the whole union first. But the honorable member from the Wellington Division complains