

duty to vote for it. (Hear, hear.) And I may say here in regard to the question of an appeal to the people upon this subject, that I at any rate can vote freely against any proposition of that kind. I stated to the people of North Oxford that in my opinion an appeal to the people upon this scheme was entirely uncalled for, and they agreed with me. I may, perhaps, take the liberty of saying to those honorable members who clamour for a dissolution, merely for the sake of ascertaining the mind of the people upon the measure, and who do not take to the untenable ground of denying the right of this Parliament to legislate on the subject, that if they did not consult their constituents with a view to obtaining an expression of public opinion, they ought to have done so. They had the scheme before them in all its details for months, and I think they ought to be in a position, when they came here, to know whether their constituents were in favor of the scheme or against it. In the meetings which were held in my county, I met with only two individuals who were prepared to go the length of denouncing the scheme *in toto*, although many would prefer to see it, in some respects, different from what it is. So well disposed did the people show themselves to be towards the union scheme, that in the town of Woodstock, where a very large and influential meeting was held, the editor of a newspaper that had been, up to that night, urging the necessity for a dissolution of Parliament before the adoption of the scheme, was the first to rise to move a resolution approving of the scheme in all its features, and neither in his speech nor in his resolution did he even hint at an appeal to the people; and that meeting voted for the scheme without a single dissentient voice. (Hear, hear.)

MR. RYMAL—The circular had been sent to that editor, perhaps. (Laughter.)

MR. H. MACKENZIE—Well, if so, I am not aware that it has done him any good or produced any change in his political course. I am quite satisfied, Mr. SPEAKER, that the people are perfectly willing that this Parliament should deal with this Confederation scheme. I will now, sir, state briefly what I think of the general features or underlying principles of the scheme. The honorable member for Brome the other night entertained the House by a very elaborate examination of the scheme, and, among other things, he proposed to show that the proposed Constitution was an entire departure

from the British model, and had in it so large an infusion of the republican system of the United States as to render it obnoxious to Britons; but, in opposition to his own premises, he succeeded in proving to a demonstration, if he proved anything, that in scarcely a single particular is it modelled after the pattern of the republic. He even denounced this scheme because it is so very different from and, in his opinion, inferior to the United States Constitution. Well, sir, I accept of it because of its British and monarchical features,—I accept of it because of its monarchical character. (Hear, hear.) I look upon it as a scheme more national than federal in its character—as looking more to a national union of the people than a union of sections, and it is chiefly because of this feature of it that it commends itself to my judgment. (Hear, hear.) The honorable member for Lotbinière dissented from this view the other night, and argued that unless the supreme power was placed in the hands of the separate provinces, it could not be acceptable to Lower Canada, as otherwise their institutions would be endangered; and yet oddly enough, he elaborated an argument to prove the fleeting and unstable character of federations established upon the only principle that he seems disposed to accept for this country. In the course of his remarks on this head, he said:—

The Hon. Minister of Agriculture said of Federalism, that it was on account of the weakness of the central power confederations had failed; and it was argued in our case, that there would not be so much weakness in the central power. This was precisely why the French-Canadians—his fellow-countrymen—looked with suspicion on the proposition to establish a Confederation with a central power—a power so strong that the local parliaments would possess, so to speak, no power at all. (Hear, hear.) All the confederations he had referred to had at least this excuse, they were sovereign states, and, when menaced by other powers, leagued themselves together for the common interest.

Now, sir, while the honorable member will have nothing to do with it, because of the supreme central power that is provided in the scheme, I take it just because of that controlling central power. I stand as an advocate of national unity, and I would not accede to the principle of state sovereignty in this Confederation, the provinces delegating certain powers to the General Government and reserving the residuum of power to themselves. (Hear, hear.) We