

Colonies, that the Imperial Government is ready to favor a separation whenever we asked for it? (Hear, hear.) Now, I am not one of those honorable gentlemen who wish to see the day arrive when the colonies will ask for such separation. I am not one of those who wish to educate the people to that idea, but would rather impress upon them the paramount importance of endeavoring to maintain the union and connection with the Mother Country. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. DEBEAUJEU—What is the opinion of the foreign press with regard to us? Has it not threatened us, so that it is our duty to be prepared?

HON. MR. SEYMOUR—I suppose my honorable friend alludes to the press of the neighboring republic. We have certainly seen some of those newspapers, but very few of them threatening to invade and overrun us, but have you heard anything of that kind from the Government of the country, and are not our relations with it of the most friendly character? Are you to be governed in your conduct by the rash utterances of a few newspapers,—perhaps sensation newspapers?

HON. MR. MACPHERSON—Has not Mr. SEWARD threatened us?

HON. MR. SEYMOUR—Not since he entered the Government. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

HON. MR. CAMPBELL—Yes, just before the last presidential election.

HON. MR. SEYMOUR—Well, that is a matter of very little importance. (Laughter.) Now, honorable gentlemen, I have shown that this scheme has no precedent, even on the other side of the line. Among all the wild republican theories of our neighbors, they have never proposed to change the Constitution in this manner—never changed it, at all events, without the consent of the people, obtained in some form or other. Reference has been made, I think, by my honorable friend in front (Hon. Mr. Ross) to the union of England and Ireland. Well, every honorable member knows the means employed to bring about that union. MAY, in his *Constitutional History*, states that £1,500,000 sterling were spent in carrying it. But how was the representation dealt with in that case? Did England, being the richer country, possessing the largest share of wealth and capital, give a preponderance of the representation to Ireland, as we propose to give to the Lower Provinces?

HON. MR. ROSS—That was a legislative union, while in this the representation will be based on population.

HON. MR. SEYMOUR—That does not affect the case. After the Irish union was effected, what was the representation of Ireland in the House of Commons? It was 100 members in a total number of 856; and in the House of Lords 28 Peers, in a House of 450 members. And although it was considered by England an absolute necessity that the union should be brought about, she did not give a preponderance, and scarcely a fair share, of the representation to the sister kingdom.

HON. MR. ROSS—That is because in the English Parliament they do not recognise the principle of representation by population.

HON. MR. SEYMOUR—My hon. friends will say that this proposed change is neither American nor English.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS—It is Canadian. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. SEYMOUR—No, it is neither one nor the other; it is a mongrel Constitution. (Laughter.) In England no important change in the laws is ever carried without being discussed in Parliament, session after session, followed by an appeal to the people upon it. Even so unimportant a change—or what would, in comparison with this scheme, be here regarded as so unimportant a change—as the extension of the franchise, has been discussed in Parliament for years, and submitted to the people before passing into law. Now, I would like to enquire of honorable gentlemen, what are the legitimate functions of the Legislature of this country. Do we not assemble here for the purpose of enacting good and wholesome laws for the people? (Hear, hear.) Those laws may be repealed, if they chance not to meet public approval; but here you propose to change the Constitution—to change the whole fabric of society—in fact to revolutionize society, without asking the consent of the people, and without the possibility—at any rate, the reasonable possibility—of this important change ever being reconsidered. Does not this important subject affect every freeholder in the country as much as it affects us, and are there not thousands of people in the country who have as great an interest in it as the members of the Executive Council of Canada? And yet, forsooth, these gentlemen prepare a scheme, bring it down to this House, and tell the representa-