

there will be no reduction in the number of their representatives, in accordance with the provisions of this 21st clause. It is the interest of Lower Canada, more than of any other province, to watch with a jealous eye over the mechanism adopted for the organization of the Federal Legislature. In case of a vital question arising, we should have to counteract the votes of these five members (who ought, in justice, to be deducted from the representation of the other provinces) by those of five of our members, whose votes would thus be lost to us, as would also be the weight which their five united counties, with a total population of 114,480 (or 22,896 for each county), would throw into the scale. Other combinations of circumstances might arise which might prove even more disadvantageous to us. This subject naturally leads me to address myself to my French Canadian colleagues; I fear that my remarks may not be well received by all, but I hope that honorable members will be good enough to excuse my frankness in consideration of the great importance of the question. I have no right to maintain that all those who are favorably disposed towards Confederation are not acting in good faith; it is not my wish to reproach them for acting according to their convictions, but in so acting they should not forget the duties which their charge imposes on them. It is a well known fact that when the scheme of Confederation was laid before the public, all the newspapers, and most of the members who support the Administration, declared themselves in favor of the scheme, but, in nearly every instance, with an express reservation of the right to introduce certain amendments which they considered indispensable. But the Honorable Attorney General for Upper Canada declared, some days ago, that the Government would accept no amendment, and that the resolutions must be adopted exactly in the shape in which they were brought down. Are honorable members going to submit to this decree? Is it not their intention at least to make an effort to have those amendments, which they looked upon as indispensable, adopted? Their position in relation to the Government confers upon them an influence which they can never exert more usefully than at present; it is their duty to exert that influence; they are responsible for the results of this measure, which cannot be adopted without their concurrence. Their principal argument in support of Confederation is that we have now an excellent opportunity of obtaining favorable

conditions—an opportunity which will probably never occur again, and one of which it is their duty to avail themselves. But have the honorable members made those conditions? Have they taken as great precautions to preserve intact the interests of nearly a million French Canadians entrusted to their care, as they would have taken in making an agreement for the sale of a farm, or even the purchase of a horse? Have they made any conditions at all? If they have made no conditions, do they at least know what the fate is that is reserved for us? Do they know the nature of the form of Government which will be imposed on Lower Canada? Can they say whether we shall have Responsible Government? No! for the Ministry refuses to speak; it will only speak when the measure of Confederation shall have been adopted, and when it is too late to raise any objections. Responsible government would not be a very efficacious remedy for the evils which I foresee, but it would, at all events, be a means of defence for us, and we ought not to reject it. It is true that, according to the 41st article of the resolutions, "The local governments and legislature of each province shall be constructed in such manner as the existing legislature of each such province shall provide." But the English element is at present in the majority. We are told that the English are naturally favorable to responsible government. That is true when it relates to themselves; for how many years did Canada remain without responsible government? The painful events of 1837 and 1838 were the result of that anomaly in the parliamentary system. Upper Canada will not need, as we shall, a local responsible government; it will not have, as we shall have, to defend a nationality which will be in a minority in the Federal Parliament, but which, at least, ought to enjoy in Lower Canada those powers which parliamentary authority everywhere accords to the majority. Upper Canada only desires to make of her local legislature a municipal council on a large scale; she will fight out her party quarrels in the wider arena of the Federal Parliament. The English of Lower Canada, who will gain nothing by having a responsible local government, because that government is the government of the majority, will unite their votes with those of Upper Canada to impose upon us the same system of government as in the other section. The local parliaments, in the event of that system being adopted, having no part in the government, will soon become perfectly useless, and