

Mr. CURRIE) said our expenditure would be greatly increased. I said that would depend upon ourselves, for we should continue to have the management of our own affairs, and the economy with which they are conducted will depend upon those who administer them. If great improvements are carried out—if the Intercolonial Railway is built, and our canals enlarged—if harbors are constructed on Lake Huron, as they must be—and if further aid should be granted to extend a railway to those harbors—if all this is done, it will be impossible to effect it and not increase our present expenditure—but those improvements will be amongst ourselves in Canada, and we shall enjoy the benefits they will confer; and Canada, it should be remembered, will have a just voice in the Confederate Legislature. I myself hope these great improvements will be carried on in the west, simultaneously with the Intercolonial Railway, although this is the only one specifically referred to in the resolutions—the enlargement of the canals being only spoken of generally. The Intercolonial Railway, hon. gentlemen, must be constructed if we have Confederation; but I hope western improvements will be carried on at the same time. (Hear, hear.) I think, honorable gentlemen, we should be governed in our votes by the consideration of the effect of this measure upon the prosperity of the provinces. If it is to do us good, we should adopt it without unnecessary delay. What is it that we expect? Have we not reason to believe that it will settle the sectional difficulties which have so long agitated and distracted the country? Will it not be the means of extending our influence over a large and most valuable territory? Will it not open the way for us to two of the finest harbors on the Atlantic—St. John and Halifax? Will it not give us access to the ocean at all seasons of the year? Will it not open to us the coal fields of the Lower Provinces? Will it not add nearly another million to our present population, and place under one government four millions of souls? (Hear.) But if the measure fails, what will our position be? I believe that our position in Upper Canada would be one of hopelessness, one bordering on despair—with none of the questions settled that have been agitating us, and which have checked the progress of the country; with representation by population not granted, and no prospect of it being granted for a long time to come, while the

agitation for it could not possibly cease until it was granted. (Hear, hear.) Furthermore, hon. gentlemen, you all know the influence that the agreement arrived at in the Conference had upon our credit in England; that it had the effect of raising the price of our securities 15 to 17 per cent. But if we fail to agree upon the measure here in Parliament, what will be the effect in Britain? Would there not be a feeling of disappointment—would not our friends there almost despair of our ever placing ourselves in a position to carry on our affairs with credit, and acting for ourselves in a statesmanlike way? Some hon. gentlemen speak of dreading to take the responsibility of a vote on a question which is to make a change in the constitution of this House, without consulting the people. Why! what are we here for if it is not to take responsibility? The people send us here for that purpose, to act as we think best upon all measures that may be presented to us. But under existing circumstances, I think the responsibility of postponing the adoption of the scheme, of putting Confederation off, is very much greater than the responsibility of sanctioning it. (Hear, hear.) I cannot help thinking that if we postpone the measure—and to adopt any amendment would have the effect of postponing it, and perhaps, of losing Confederation for ever—our conduct will be considered extremely factious and unpatriotic. A good deal has been said about a possible dead-lock between this House and the other House, but there has been little of that in past times, and nothing of a serious nature. If, however, the amendment passes, I can imagine a dead-lock which might be extremely prejudicial to this House—prejudicial to its influence in the country; nay, almost destructive of it. Suppose these resolutions to be carried in the other House by a large majority, which I have little doubt will be the case, and we carry an amendment here—suppose all the legislatures of the Lower Provinces adopt the resolutions, and this House stands alone in rejecting them—do you believe the British Parliament will be turned aside from what it believes to be the best interests of British America by the action of this House? I can imagine a dead-lock occurring then, and one in consequence of which the opinion of this House might be set aside and its vote disregarded. Until this measure is carried out it is impossible the