

riding, and at every one of them the people were unanimous in supporting the scheme. (Hear, hear.) Some of the details were objected to, but the scheme as a whole was approved of. These meetings were attended by men of all parties, and the resolutions were moved and seconded in many cases by my political opponents. I did not find more than three gentlemen, at all of those meetings, who gave opposition to the measure. And I may say further, that, when an appeal to the people was mentioned, the expression of opinion was, that it was not at all desirable or necessary, as it was known that the measure was so generally approved of. The result was, that my constituents instructed me to support these resolutions, giving me authority at the same time to propose amendments to such details as I might disapprove of, if the Government would allow any amendments to be made. (Hear, hear.) I find, from conversation with several hon. members from the west, that I differ from them with reference to the composition of the Legislative Council. I hardly approved of the proposition of the Government when an innovation was made on the constitution of the Legislative Council in 1855. I felt it was a wrong step, and fully sympathized with the opposition given to it at that time by the present Hon. President of the Council (Hon. Mr. BROWN) and the honorable member for Peel (Honorable J. H. CAMERON). Had I then been in a position to give effect to my views, I should have joined those honorable gentlemen in protesting against that encroachment upon the Constitution. I approve entirely of the proposition contained in the resolutions now before the House, with reference to this matter. If a necessity exists at all for a check upon hasty and ill-digested legislation of the popular branch, that check should not derive its power from the same source, and in the same manner. I have, however, for some time inclined to the opinion that the Legislative Council might, with safety, be abolished altogether, and that thereby there would be effected an immense saving to the country. In carrying out this scheme, very much, of course, will depend upon the character of the local constitutions. If such a system can be adopted as will render the working of the local governments simple and inexpensive, it will conduce very much to the prosperity of the whole Confederation. I must say, sir, that if I am permitted to have a voice in the framing of a Constitution for

Upper Canada, I shall insist upon it being of the most inexpensive kind, dispensing with a great deal of the paraphernalia that we see so much of here. (Hear, hear.) In bringing the new system into operation, and laying the foundations of the new nationality of British North America on a permanent and enduring basis, a weighty responsibility indeed devolves on the governments of these provinces, and the most rigid economy consistent with propriety ought to be, and I trust will be, a leading feature in their arrangements. (Hear, hear.) Mr. SPEAKER, I am no alarmist, but disguise it as we may, this country is at the present moment deeply depressed. I entirely dissent from sentiments enunciated by honorable gentlemen on the floor of this House as to the general prosperity of Canada; the actual state of matters is not as they represent it. Through a failure of crops for a number of years back in Upper Canada, that section of the province is in a state of agricultural and commercial prostration; farmers and others are unable to meet their engagements to the merchant, who, in consequence, is unable to meet his liabilities to the wholesale dealers, and the result is that scores, I may say hundreds, are obliged to collapse and go into liquidation; bank agencies are being withdrawn from the country districts, and banking accommodation very much curtailed. Mr. SPEAKER, these are facts that cannot be gainsayed. Every branch of industry is almost paralyzed at the present moment, and a general gloom hangs like a pall over the land. Under these circumstances, it behoves the Government to do everything in their power to revive and foster industry in the country. Sir, I will not say that this Government does so, but governments have been too much in the habit of borrowing from the banks that capital which ought to go into circulation for the benefit of the trade of the country. I hold that it is the duty of all governments to refrain from doing anything that will bear upon the people's industry; and I implore this Government to turn their attention to the position of this country just now, and do all they can to better the condition of the people. While, sir, there are features in the proposition before you which, if they stood alone on their merits, I should certainly oppose, yet, as I stated before, I do not think them of sufficient importance to justify me in rejecting the scheme, which is certainly calculated to elevate us from the position of