

and that it should be thoroughly understood by the people before it is adopted; she is less anxious to enforce the details of the project than to see the people of the provinces content and satisfied with it. If a large portion of the people were opposed to the project, I do not think that England would approve of forcing this project upon them without giving time to examine it or to pronounce upon it. The opinion of the country upon this plan is, to-day, quite unknown. I am quite aware that certain members can vote in favor of the project with the certainty of their course meeting the approval of their constituents; for instance, those whose elections have taken place since the plan was submitted to the country. But in those parts of the country where no elections have taken place, it is impossible to say that the people will be satisfied or that they will endorse the action of their representatives in voting for Confederation, because we have not been enabled to make it known. Thus when my constituents invited me to a public meeting to discuss the subject, I was compelled to admit that I could not tell them what the plan of Confederation was; that I could not communicate it to them, because the resolutions I had received were private. I also told them that I did not wish to form my opinion before hearing the discussion and learning the details; but to-day we are refused the details, and the adoption of the project is pressed without affording us time to study it as it is. An attempt will probably be made to injure us in the opinion of our electors if we vote against this project, and we shall be accused of having opposed Confederation; but I trust the people will see that we cannot vote for a thing with which we are not acquainted, and that we shall have their approval in the course we shall adopt. When the project of Confederation is submitted to the English Parliament, they will take it for granted that the people of this country approve of it; but they will never suppose that the measure has been forced upon the people without affording them the opportunity of pronouncing for or against it. But there is another thing; it is not surprising that this project should be looked upon with a favorable eye in England, for public opinion is composed specially of that of the industrial and commercial classes, and it is the interest of those classes to favor Confederation. But let us well consider whether the interests of those classes is ours also. I consider that our present political course should be to see to the interests of the agri-

culture, the trade and the industry of our country, before laboring to build up that of English traders and artisans. If by Confederation we unite provinces, the inhabitants of which find it their interest to have a very low tariff adopted, it might very well happen that the agricultural interest of Canada might not find itself so well off, and in such a case what would be the result? The result would be that we should very soon have an enormous debt, and that, should the customs revenue not suffice to meet it and provide for the expenditure, the deficit would have to be made up by means of direct taxation, which would weigh upon the agriculture and industry of the country. If we have a tariff of twenty per cent., it protects the industry of our native land, and is a source of revenue wherewith to provide for the public expenditure; but if we make it too low, real property will suffer, for on it will be laid the burthen imposed to meet the deficit. Confederation would appear to me to be very costly, for money is scattered on all sides in handfuls. Thus it is proposed to construct the Intercolonial Railway, which will cost at least \$20,000,000; to Upper Canada is given \$16,000,000 to improve its canals; \$150,000 a year is given to Newfoundland, as a compensation for mines which perhaps do not exist, and \$63,000 to New Brunswick; and after all this the Local and Federal Governments have the power conferred on them of adding new taxes to those which already exist in order to meet the expenditure; and I have no doubt whatever but that they will avail themselves of that permission. All this is deserving of consideration, and these are reasons which should induce the Government to submit the question to the people, instead of wishing to have it decided at once; for, even allowing the measure to be absolutely a good one, the people will always regard it with mistrust if it is thrust upon them. What! we are told that we are perhaps on the eve of a war with our neighbors, and we run the risk of dissatisfying the people by imposing a system upon them to which they are perhaps opposed. It is not only in the district of Montreal that the submission of the question to the people is called for—the *Toronto Leader* says that the people ought to be consulted, and this appears to me to be most reasonable. For my part, I am in favor of an appeal to the people, and I cannot approve of Confederation being thrust upon them without their being consulted. Let it be well understood, if it is wished that the population should make sacrifices for its