

ever to raise or keep up anything like a standing army.

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—Will my honorable friend let me ask him how we can assist England in a war on the high seas unless we have a naval force?

HON. MR. DORION—The honorable member for Peterborough stated the other day, and correctly I believe, that the place for our militia was behind the fortifications of our fortified places, where they would count for something to be of some use. No doubt of this. Why, sir, it is absurd to speak of defending this country with such a force as we could maintain when we have the recent example before our eyes of a country in Europe possessing as large a defensive force, literally wiped off the map by an invading army of some 75,000 or 80,000 men. The kingdom of Denmark consists now of only two small islands—less by far, in extent, than one of our large counties; and this dismemberment has been forced upon it, although it had a standing army of 30,000 men, and the feeling of the whole population was in favor of the war. (Hear, hear.) I do not use this argument for the purpose of showing that something ought not to be done respecting our militia. I am willing that we should make sacrifices, if necessary, for the purpose of organizing it thoroughly; but I am decidedly opposed to a standing army, and do not believe we could raise an army now that would be able to withstand the force that could be sent against it. (Hear, hear.) We have sent to the frontier 2,000 men, whose services for a year will cost us a million and a-half; and at the same rate of expenditure, 50,000 men would cost us over thirty millions of money. Now, if the whole defence of the country is to rest upon us, I ask again what would such a force amount to? (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, when I look into the provisions of this scheme, I find another most objectionable one. It is that which gives the General Government control over all the acts of the local legislatures. What difficulties may not arise under this system? Now, knowing that the General Government will be party in its character, may it not for party purposes reject laws passed by the local legislatures and demanded by a majority of the people of that locality. This power conferred upon the General Government has been compared to the veto power that exists in England in respect to our legislation; but we know that the statesmen of England are not actuated by the local feelings and

prejudices, and do not partake of the local jealousies, that prevail in the colonies. The local governments have therefore confidence in them, and respect for their decisions; and generally, when a law adopted by a colonial legislature is sent to them, if it does not clash with the policy of the Empire at large, it is not disallowed, and more especially of late has it been the policy of the Imperial Government to do whatever the colonies desire in this respect, when their wishes are constitutionally expressed. The axiom on which they seem to act is that the less they hear of the colonies the better. (Hear, hear.) But how different will be the result in this case, when the General Government exercises the veto power over the acts of local legislatures. Do you not see that it is quite possible for a majority in a local government to be opposed to the General Government; and in such a case the minority would call upon the General Government to disallow the laws enacted by the majority? The men who shall compose the General Government will be dependent for their support upon their political friends in the local legislatures, and it may so happen that, in order to secure this support, or in order to serve their own purposes or that of their supporters, they will veto laws which the majority of a local legislature find necessary and good. (Hear, hear.) We know how high party feeling runs sometimes upon local matters even of trivial importance, and we may find parties so hotly opposed to each other in the local legislatures, that the whole power of the minority may be brought to bear upon their friends who have a majority in the General Legislature, for the purpose of preventing the passage of some law objectionable to them but desired by the majority of their own section. What will be the result of such a state of things but bitterness of feeling, strong political acrimony and dangerous agitation? (Hear, hear.) Then sir, I find that in addition to all the other sums that are to be paid by the general to the local governments, there are provisions in favor of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, which must strike the House as being of a rather extraordinary nature. In the document which was sent by the Provincial Secretary to the members of this House marked "Private," there appears to have been a mistake. It was therein stated that the General Government would have no right to impose an export duty on timber, logs, masts, spars, deals and sawn lumber; but that the local governments would have the power