

Monday, 7th May, 1886.

House in Committee on various Despatches and Papers.
—Mr. JOHN YEO in the Chair.

CONFEDERATION QUESTION.

Hon. the Leader of the Government (J. C. POPE).
With respect to the important question of Confederation, I do not at present intend to say much more than that I hold in my hand certain Resolutions in which are embodied my views concerning that question, and which are most decidedly adverse to the scheme of Union as propounded and agreed to at the Quebec Conference. To hon. members holding the same opinion as myself concerning that scheme, these Resolutions will, I apprehend, be accepted as a sufficiently full and satisfactory declaration of our sentiments concerning it. To some, however, whose repugnance to the proposed union may be little less than my own, they may, probably, be considered too strong; and, perhaps, by others, not strong enough. I shall, however, submit them to this Committee in their present form: and it will be for them to modify, abridge, enlarge, or accept them in their present form just as the majority, in their wisdom, may determine. The great reason why we protest against anything in the shape of Union, is our dread of being swamped by the Canadas. When the scheme was before this House in the session of 186 , it was condemned by a majority on each side. As respects the Executive, one or two members of it are, I regret to say, favourable to it, but the majority are strenuously opposed to it. That, however, as respects the discussion of the question, is but of little consequence, for opposition to the scheme is not now to be offered as any part of the policy of the Cabinet, and all parties are quite free to discuss the question wholly upon its own merits, and quite untrammelled by political ties or connexions. Two members of the Cabinet were Delegates to the Quebec Convention, and in the Conference held by that Convention, none expressed themselves more strongly in favor of the Scheme of Union projected by it than they did; and, for their consistent adherence to the convictions concerning it, which they then avowed, surely even such amongst us as are the most opposed to the Union, can have no right whatever to censure or condemn them; and neither do I believe any one of us arrogates to himself or assumes such a right. These gentlemen have, ever since the question arose, acted with respect to it, most honestly and consistently, and in perfect good faith. I speak more particularly of the Hon. the Solicitor General (Mr. HAVILAND), whose conduct with