

calt to spend hours in captious criticism as to the details of such a scheme as is proposed. But I think we may fairly call on those gentlemen who criticise in a hostile spirit a measure of this character, to say what else they propose to do; for, if we cannot carry this into practical operation now, it is quite evident something else must be devised. I recollect that last year, when the present administration came down to the House proposing such a plan for settling our difficulties, and received, as I for one imagined, the sanction of this House, I remarked that the course of the House was a revolutionary one, the revolution to be a peaceable one certainly, but still a revolution. It implied the opinion on the part of our public men, that our present system could not be gone on with; and if our present system cannot be continued, we ought not to attempt to throw out this measure merely because it does not entirely meet the views of every member of this House. (Hear.) I think it would have been desirable that all the members from Lower Canada should have united with us and studied out a new system, and gone to work earnestly to give it effect by the necessary legislation. (Hear.) I did hope that when the measure came down and we met this session to discuss it, it would not have been thought necessary by any one to organize a regular opposition. Certainly I did not expect that honorable gentlemen like the honorable members for Hochelaga and Chateauguay, who have hitherto appeared to recognize the gravity of our constitutional difficulties, or have at least asserted that they did, would have found it necessary to go into unqualified opposition. I rather thought they would have endeavored to give effect to the measure as the only remedial one within our reach. (Hear, hear.) It is not because I think the measure entirely faultless that I propose to give it my utmost support, but because I believe every other measure to be impossible now, and because, under the proposed government, the country has a great future before it. Looking at the matter commercially, as a question of comparative cheapness, we shall not be, to say the least, any worse off than at the present moment. I believe we shall be able to govern as cheaply united as we now do separately. I apprehend there will be no necessity in the Local Legislature for more than one chamber, and although this branch of the subject has not been discussed in the House, and we do not know what the propositions of the Government are to be, I

may take occasion to say that I hope they will not think of adopting the double system in our local legislatures, for it will cause a serious increase of expenditure, not attended with a corresponding benefit. (Hear, hear.) The honorable member for Montreal Centre devoted a large portion of his speech last night to the military side of the question, and argued very strongly, from the position of the neighboring republic, that it was absolutely indispensable for us to become a military power. Now, while I am not at all disposed to take the view that gentleman does of the position of the United States relatively towards ourselves; while I do not think that any large proportion of the people of the United States have hostile inclinations towards ourselves—though they are apt to indulge in language that is undoubtedly unbecoming and certainly threatening; while I do not at all anticipate they will adopt, in so unjustifiable a manner as he seemed to expect, any hostile measures towards us, it is not to be denied that with a population of three millions and a half, it will be absolutely necessary for us to take some steps that will place us in a more independent position. It is not honorable, it is not manly for so powerful a colony as this is to depend entirely on the Mother Country for protection. (Hear, hear.) I took occasion to express these views last year, when discussing the estimates, and said I hoped the Government would bring down a measure to pay a large portion of the expenditure attendant on the maintenance, by the Imperial Government, of British troops among us. (Hear, hear.) Portugal, with a population as nearly as can be equal to our own, has a standing army of 17,000 men. Holland, with about the same population as ourselves at home, but with extensive colonies abroad, has a standing army of 57,500 men. Denmark, with a population not quite equal to one half what the Confederacy will possess, has an army of 22,900 men. Now I do not think it will be at all necessary for us to maintain a standing army like these nations. I do not think we are in the same position as these countries, because our wealth is, to a great extent, not realized. It would be hardly fair to assess some of our new counties, where people own nothing but their land, at the nominal value of that land, for the purpose of paying a large standing army; and besides we have no colonies, no outside sources of wealth. I think, however, we are nearly as well able, man for man, to maintain a force necessary for our defence as the people of Great Bri-