

against continuing the elective principle in this House, can have done so with as much satisfaction to themselves as if they had not, on a previous occasion, pursued a different course. I well recollect that when I found it was the determination to introduce the elective principle in relation to the membership of this House, I said—Gentlemen, if the principle is good in one case, it is good in another; let us make the Speaker elective. No, no, they said, that will not do; that is republicanism. They would not have the Speaker made elective. You know there was a little patronage at disposal by keeping the appointment of the Speaker in the Government. At that time I could make no progress in getting the House to go for making the Speaker elective. Since then, however, they made the Speaker elective, and therefore the House must admit that I was right on that occasion. I opposed the House being made elective, but honorable gentlemen made it elective, and now they are going to reinvest the appointments in the Crown. So it is clear that when the first change was made I was also right on that occasion. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) When the proposal was made to grant three millions of money to the Grand Trunk, I saw it was being done for political support, and I therefore opposed it. I also opposed the grants to the Arthabaska, and Port Hope and Peterborough railways, because I considered them only convenient methods of acquiring parliamentary support on the pretence of getting money for the Grand Trunk proper. Those roads were termed "feeders" for the Grand Trunk, but I called them Grand Trunk "suckers." (Laughter.) I take to myself some little credit for having taken this view of those questions. I am willing to admit that the Grand Trunk is a very great benefit to the province in a material point of view, but I do believe that we paid very dearly for the whistle. (Laughter.) Having paid so dearly for that road, running, as it does, through the very finest portion of the country, I am disposed to be very cautious about entering upon the construction of this Inter-colonial Railway. (Hear, hear.) I have often availed myself of a leaf out of the book of my honorable friend (Hon. Mr. Ross) and I like to stick pretty close by him, because if I get off the track he has the happy faculty of putting me on again. Now, I would like to ask him whether or not, in the remarks he made this afternoon, he stated that there had been no demand on the part of the people for an elective Legislative Council since the union.

HON. MR. ROSS—What I said was, that there had been no general demand for the change on the part of the people of Upper Canada. I am well aware that there was agitation on the subject in Lower Canada.

HON. MR. DICKSON—Well, I find here in the *Journals of the Legislative Assembly* for 1855, that on the 21st of May, when the second reading of the Bill to make this House elective was defeated, the following was entered on the *Journals* by eight honorable members, in the shape of reasons for their dissent from the vote, viz. :—

DISSENTIENT—Because public opinion has long and repeatedly been expressed on the necessity of rendering this branch of the Legislature elective; because the almost unanimous vote of the Legislative Assembly, irrespective of party, has, in the most unequivocal manner, ratified the opinion of the people as hereinbefore expressed; because the opposition of this House to the universal desire of the inhabitants of Canada, unsustained either by a party in the other branch of the Legislature or out of it, is unprecedented, and of a nature to cause the most serious apprehensions.

The first name, honorable gentlemen, signed to that protest is the Honorable JOHN ROSS, and the second is my honorable and gallant friend, Sir E. P. TACHÉ. Then there are the Honorable Messrs. PANET, BELLEAU, ARMSTRONG, PERRY, LEGARÉ, and CARTIER. Well, I can now exonerate all those gentlemen, after observing, as I have done, how well the elective principle has worked in its application to this House. But I cannot understand how honorable gentlemen could have entertained the view that great disaster would be the result of refusing to grant the elective principle, and then inside of ten years, when their ideas had been put into practical effect, and had worked so admirably, they could again rise in this House and advocate a return to the system which then was so bad, and which the people were so determined to have altered. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. ROSS—I was then a member of the Government, and spoke their sentiments.

HON. MR. DICKSON—Well then, honorable gentlemen, it seems I am to understand that the honorable gentleman did not then express the sentiments of Hon. Mr. Ross as an individual, but of Hon. Mr. Ross as a member of the Government. I have never been in the Government, and therefore, perhaps, I am pardonable for not having understood that the gentleman carried about with him a double set of sentiments, either of which could be used as occasion seemed to demand. (Laughter.) But, in furtherance of the argument for delay,