

mercial class, in consequence of the liberty which we took of imposing high duties on English merchandize imported into this country; but the English Government did not share that discontent, I am happy to say, and did not choose to interfere. This fact, however, was of a nature to cast a chill upon the interest with which we were regarded in England; but when the news of Confederation reached England, that interest was revived, and has ever since continued to increase. If we desire to interest England in our fate, we must draw closer the bonds that unite us to her, and we must do it by means of the Confederation now proposed to us, because that measure once carried out, she will undoubtedly put forth her whole strength for our defence if we should be attacked. Moreover, in view of the events which have recently occurred in the southern portion of this continent, if we reflect that it seems to be the policy of France and of England to establish a balance of power similar to what exists in Europe, if we consider that it is for this end that France has established an empire in Mexico, it is clear that England cannot but view with a favorable eye the movement now in progress here for the Confederation of all the British North American Provinces. It is not at such a time as this, therefore, that England would be disposed to abandon her colonies, as it has been pretended by some. I stated, a moment ago, that we should not resist the just demands of the British population of this country, provided they do not ask anything involving injustice towards French-Canadians. If we were guilty of injustice towards them, they would complain, and propose a plan of constitution humiliating to the French-Canadians, and they would no longer entertain sentiments of esteem and consideration for us. I do not refer to this matter for the purpose of discouraging my own fellow-countrymen, but because I believe it is necessary that they should take this view of the matter into account in the position in which we now find ourselves placed. To-day our position is an excellent one; we are strong as a party, we have statesmen at the head of the affairs of our country who are devoted to its interest—they have proved it again and again—and united together by the ties of interest and friendship; and above all, we have ever had confidence in those who prepared the project of a Constitu-

tion now submitted for our consideration; it is evident, then, that a more favorable opportunity could not possibly be found for effecting constitutional changes than the present circumstances afford. These men, who are surely possessed of as much diplomatic skill as the representatives of the other provinces can exhibit, will undoubtedly look after the interests of Lower Canada; and their opinion, based upon justice, will prevail with those to whom the preparation of our new Constitution is to be entrusted. Moreover, what I have just stated is perfectly understood by every influential class in the country, by all men who help to form public opinion, who are the guides of the people, and who have hitherto managed to lead them aright, and to bring them into a safe harbor at the last. To-day these men and these influences are in favor of the present plan, and all are convinced of its necessity. But, on the other hand, what are the influences opposed to Confederation in Lower Canada? They are confined to a party which has existed for the past fifteen years in Lower Canada, and which has always been remarkable for its opposition to all measures demanded and supported by the party representing in this House the vast majority of the people of Lower Canada. This persistent opposition to the measures of the Lower Canadian party savoured of revolution—for your revolutionist is by nature incapable of submitting to the majority; it is the same party which in other countries forms secret societies, by means of which society is thrown into disorder—and it is admitted that everywhere, in Europe as well as in America, these secret societies are composed of men who are invariably opposed to everything calculated to secure the peace and happiness of the people. Is it not true that in 1856 or 1857 a place in the Administration was offered to one of the leaders of that party by the present Attorney General, and that an opening was repeatedly made for them, because it was thought that they were acting in good faith? Now, did they not invariably refuse the alliance offered them? And did they not even refuse to give a cordial support to the MACDONALD-SICOTTE Administration, which was composed of Liberal-Conservatives? And the reason was, that that Administration was not exclusively composed of the democratic element.

HON. MR. DORION—Who voted against that Administration, and who defeated it?