

Having said so much on the general policy of the union, I might have been disposed to enter at greater length into it, were it not that I wished to keep faith with my honorable friend from Lambton; but, having said so much on the higher grounds which recommend this scheme, I will now say a few words in reference to the objections which have been urged against its character, viz., because it embraces those elements of disruption which are to be found in every federal union. That is the objection of many who, while they would be willing to go for a purely legislative union, object to one of a federal character. They see in it that which tends to a disruption, and collision with the Central Government. Now, sir, I do not deny that if a legislative union, pure and simple, had been practicable, I, for one, would have preferred it; but I cannot disguise from myself that it was, and is at present, utterly impracticable, and I cannot help expressing my astonishment and extreme gratification, that five colonies which had been for so many years separate from each other, had so many separate and distinct interests and local differences, should come together and agree upon such a scheme. Remembering the difficulties that had to be encountered in the shape of local interests, personal ambition, and separate governments, I certainly am surprised at the result, and I cannot withhold from the gentlemen who conducted these negotiations, the highest praise for the manner in which they overcame the difficulties that met them at every step, and for the spirit in which they sunk their own personal differences and interests in preparing this scheme of Confederation. (Hear, hear.) It is remarkable that a proposition having so few of the objections of a Federal system, should have been assented to by the representatives of five distinct colonies, which had heretofore been alien, practically independent, not only of each other, but almost of England, and almost hostile to each other. (Hear, hear.) There had been very much to keep these colonies apart, and very little to bring them together, and the success which has attended their efforts speaks well for those statesmen who applied their minds earnestly to the work of union. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. HOLTON—The necessity was urgent.

HON. MR. ROSE—I quite understand the ironical spirit of my honorable friend—

but the work of Confederation was no less one of vital importance to the country. I cannot help saying that I had no sympathy with the hon. member for Hochelaga (Hon. Mr. DORION), the other evening, in his historical detail of all the antecedent difficulties which existed in our political position. That honorable gentleman told us what were the opinions of this member and of that one at different periods,—commented on their inconsistency, and claimed that he himself had always been firm in his opposition to the project. Well, sir, I do not care what may have been the views of one member or of another, or how inconsistent he may have been. What we have to consider is the scheme which is now presented to us. Let us forget the past; let us forget former differences; do not let us revive former animosities! Let us consider that we are starting fresh in life, or as the term has been used, that we are entering upon a new era of national existence. (Hear, hear.) Let us cast aside past recriminations and look at the merits of this scheme. I have only to say that a man who does not change his opinions is a very unsafe man indeed to guide the affairs of a nation. Such a man is like an old sign-post on a road that is no longer used for travel. The sign-post is consistent enough, it remains where it had been placed, but though a type of consistency it is an emblem of error. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member for Hochelaga spoke of his consistency and the inconsistency of others, but he was like the sign-post which pointed out a road that existed twenty years ago, but which no one could now pass over. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I think, therefore, that instead of endeavoring to find objections to this scheme because it does not give us a legislative instead of a federal union, we ought to acknowledge the sacrifices of those men who came together and prepared it. (Hear, hear.) Whatever may be said of our desire to get out of our own constitutional difficulties in Canada, that objection cannot be urged against the public men of the Lower Provinces. Newfoundland has not been in a state of crisis like us, and New Brunswick has been tolerably faithful to Mr. TILLEY for the last ten years; a short time ago the Premier of Nova Scotia had a majority of thirty in a very small house—everything went on swimmingly there, and even Prince Edward Island was not much embarrassed.