

Provinces beseeching them to come to an understanding as regarded a change of the Constitution, and with respect to a scheme of Confederation. Explanations were the result, which have only been given on a few important points; the delegates of the Lower Provinces, after having obtained the most favorable financial stipulations for those whom they represented, have still further imposed their views and have modified the scheme of Confederation in a manner at variance with the views of our Ministers; and yet, after the Maritime Provinces have repudiated the action of their delegates, the Government still obstinately persists in obtaining the adoption of the scheme without any amendment whatsoever. If that resolution passes, we shall ask England to change our Constitution, and to give us one which will not be in accordance with the views of our ministers, and still less with those of the people of this province. But let us see what the honorable member for Montmorency said in 1858 on this subject. I cite from page 12:—

To ask England to change the Constitution is to give her an opportunity of changing it to suit her own views or those of our enemies. Nay, more, to ask that we should take the first step is to claim it for all the provinces, it is to call upon them too to say upon what conditions they will accept the Federal union.

But in the conflict of all these voices one only will never be heard from the Imperial Throne, because it would be in the French language. It is no prejudice, it is but the history of our fifty years of trial and sorrow.

Have circumstances so greatly changed since 1858? What has occurred since that period to give the honorable member for Montmorency more confidence now in the justice of England, or in the efficacy of our petitions than he then had? Is not the history of our fifty years of sufferings vivid in the memories of all? When we asked the Imperial Government to change the constitution of the Legislative Council, did they not unnecessarily, and without our having sought it, repeal the clause which rendered necessary a two-thirds vote to change the basis of the representation? That safeguard of the interests of Lower Canada was taken away from us without our knowing, and at the present moment we do not know at whose instance that clause of the Union Act was expunged. Have we not similar reason to fear that they may impose on Lower Canada a new Constitution, with conditions which will encroach upon the rights solemnly guaranteed to us by treaty? And this is the more

probable from the fact that, this scheme having been rejected by the Lower Provinces, England will not be desirous of enforcing it upon them, and that if it is adopted by the Imperial Parliament, it can only be so adopted with such modifications as will make it applicable to Canada alone, leaving to the Lower Provinces the right of accepting it hereafter; and Heaven alone knows what these modifications will be, and how they may affect our institutions. (Hear. hear.) If the Imperial Parliament thinks proper to take up this Constitution without the acceptance of it by the Maritime Provinces, it will come back to us, as did the answer to the Address in relation to the Legislative Council, entirely different from the Address we are about to vote.

HON. MR. EVANTUREL—I thought I understood, when explanations were given to-day by the Hon. Atty. Gen. West, that the Government intended to lay before Her Majesty the Address to be passed by this House, then to ask the advice of the Imperial Government as to what they had better do under the circumstances, and then return and report to the House.

HON. MR. DORION—I enquired, in language as explicit as it was possible to use, of the Hon. Atty. Gen. West, whether the Government would submit a new Constitution for ratification by the Legislature, and he only replied that the Government would submit the whole matter to the Imperial Government, that is to say, the Address to be passed by this House, and an explanation of the present state of matters in view of the defeat of the scheme of Confederation in the Lower Provinces. He refused to say that the Government would come back to the House with the measure.

HON. ATTY. GEN. CARTIER—The honorable member for Hochelaga would like to make the House believe that it is the intention of the Government to cause a measure to be passed by the Imperial Government against the wishes of this House; but no such conclusion can be drawn from the explanations given by my honorable friend the Hon. Atty. Gen. West. He stated that a deputation would go to England, and that they would submit to the Imperial Government the addresses of the two Houses, containing the plan of Confederation adopted by the delegates of all the provinces, and that they would urge upon the Imperial Government to bring down a measure that should apply to all the provinces.

HON. MR. LAFRAMBOISE—That is