

MR. DUNKIN—Well, I will say this, that if the hon. gentleman can please all parties in Lower Canada with only three members in the Executive Council, he will prove himself the cleverest statesman in Canada.

HON. ATTY. GEN. CARTIER—Upon whose authority does the hon. gentleman say there will be only three?

MR. DUNKIN—The hon. gentleman has evidently not been listening to my line of argument, and I do not think that, to enlighten him, I am called upon to punish the House by going over it all again. (Hear, hear.) What I say is, that if the number of the Executive Council is fixed according to the wants of the country as a whole, and not to what I may call the local wants of the several provinces, there will be in all some eleven, twelve or thirteen members; and you will have a number so small in proportion to the various interests to be satisfied, that it will be extremely difficult to avoid serious trouble in the matter of its local distribution. On the other hand, if you give all the localities the number they had need have, on local grounds, the Council will be too large to work. It will be practically impossible to meet the needs of all the provinces; and yet, none can be left out in the cold, on pain of consequences. (Hear, hear.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. CARTIER—When the matter is brought to a test, the hon. gentleman will see that he has aggravated the difficulty.

MR. DUNKIN—SIDNEY SMITH once said of a leading Cabinet minister at home, that he would be willing at the shortest notice, either to undertake the duties of the Archbishop of Canterbury or to assume command of the Channel fleet. (Laughter.) We have some public men in this country who, in their own judgment, have ample capacity for assuming the responsibility and discharging the functions of those two high posts, and perhaps of a field marshal or commander-in-chief besides. (Renewed laughter.)

HON. ATTY. GEN. CARTIER—I would say, that although I do not feel equal to the task of commanding the Channel fleet or filling the office of Archbishop of Canterbury, I do feel equal to the work of forming an Executive Council that will be satisfactory to Upper and Lower Canada, as well as to the Lower Provinces. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

MR. DUNKIN—Well, it will require, in my opinion, something more than bold assertion, and capacity for a hearty laugh, to overcome the difficulty that will some day or other be presented. (Hear, hear.) And now, sir, I come to speak of the relations to subsist between this Federal power and the different provinces, as compared with those between the United States and the different states. Again, the comparison has to be made much more with the United States system than with that of Great Britain; although, unfortunately, perhaps, there is in this part of the scheme some confusion of inconsistent features of the two systems. Great Britain has not yet, in any true sense of the term, federated herself with any of her colonies. She just retains a nominal supremacy over them.

MR. SCOBLE—It is a real supremacy.

MR. DUNKIN—No; it is only nominal as regards its exercise. It is not real in the sense of amounting to a substantial, practical exercise of power over the colonies. For these nearly five and twenty years past, I call to mind no legislative act of ours disallowed by the Home Government.

AN HON. MEMBER—Yes, there was one—Mr. HINCKS' Currency Act.

MR. DUNKIN—Well, I believe that was. But in that case we got our own way in effect directly afterwards. I am referring more particularly, of course, to what may be called the conduct of our own domestic affairs. There is no mistake but we have had given to us by Great Britain a control practically unlimited over our own affairs; she lets us do what we like, while professing to retain a perfect nominal supremacy over us. She appoints our Governor General, but when he comes here, he does what we want, not what she may want. She can, if she likes, disallow all our statutes; but for all practical purposes she never does. She may, if she chooses, alter or repeal the Charter of our liberties which she granted to us, but she never thinks of doing such a thing, and we know she will not. Well, here in this proposed Constitution—looking to the relations which are to subsist between the Federation and the provinces—in lieu of a real Federation, such as subsists between the United States and the different states, we find an attempt to adopt to a considerable extent the British system of a stated supremacy, not meant to be in fact the half of what it passes for in theory. But, however such a system may work as between Great