

wisdom had previously devised to secure the peace and prosperity of the nations of the New World. But in our dear Canada, with all the English precedents of which so much account is made, we do not require such precautions. It is quite enough that men should have been found guilty of misapplication of the public money, that they shall have abused each other as political robbers for ten years, to bring about a coalition of the combatants, to make them hug each other till all feeling of personal dignity is lost, and all regard for principle is forgotten. It is enough, I say, that we have a scandalous union—a state of political profligacy—like that perpetrated in 1864, to believe in our right to do what we please. (Hear, hear.) With a majority of thirty or forty votes, we hesitate at nothing. The Constitution, which hampers the curvetings and prancings of our leading chiefs too much, and rather curbs their personal ambition—which circumscribes in short the range of their speculative operations, is found to be inconvenient. It is assailed with relentless blows; it is to be thrown down without asking the leave of those most concerned; and in its place is to be set up a new order of things under which there is to be no more regard for political principles than for the rights and wants of the people. A simple parliamentary majority of one will be sufficient with us to overthrow the entire political order of things, and we have no appeal from so important a decision, save an appeal to an authority three thousand miles off, which may add something to the scheme to make it less acceptable to us than it already is. (Hear, hear.) The people may hereafter condemn their representatives, but the mischief will be done! This is all the consolation we shall have. Is not the contrast between our stupid method of doing things, and the prudent rational proceeding of our neighbors, a very striking one? And truly they are our superiors in all political respects. Now, let me justify my opposition to the projected change. I am opposed to the scheme of Confederation, because the first resolution is nonsense and repugnant to truth; it is not a Federal union which is offered to us, but a Legislative union in disguise. Federalism is completely eliminated from this scheme, which centres everything in the General Government. Federalism means the union of certain states, which retain their full sovereignty in everything that immediately concerns them, but submitting to the General Government questions of peace, of war, of foreign relations, foreign trade, cus-

toms and postal service. Is that what is proposed to us? Not at all. In the scheme we are now examining, all is strength and power, in the Federal Government; all is weakness, insignificance, annihilation in the Local Government! I am opposed to the scheme of Confederation, because, far from removing the difficulties complained of between Upper Canada and Lower Canada, it must, if adopted, simply multiply them tenfold. There will be a constant conflict of authorities, particularly as to questions submitted to the double action of the local and general legislatures. I am opposed to the scheme of Confederation, because the Constitution in which it is to be embodied will be faulty in its very basis. We are told that the representation is to be based upon population in one House, and that the principle of equality is to prevail in the other; and to-day that principle is violated as regards Newfoundland, as it will be, no doubt, to-morrow in favor of British Columbia and Vancouver Island, should those colonies think proper to enter into our proposed Confederation. What is to prevent the smaller provinces forming a league together, and thus getting the upper hand of the larger but less numerous provinces, on purely local questions? That is one of the great defects of the Ministerial scheme, in my opinion. But, moreover, the autonomy of Lower Canada is menaced and placed at the mercy of a parliament of one hundred and ninety-four members, of whom forty-seven, or at most forty-eight only, will represent the views of the majority of its people. I am opposed to the scheme of Confederation, because it takes away from the people of this country political rights which they have won by many years of struggles; among others that of electing its representatives in the Legislative Council, as it does its representatives in the Assembly. Since 1856, we have enjoyed an elective Council. For more than half a century that reform had been asked for. Our claims were urged in the press, in public meetings, in petitions to Parliament and to the home Government, and in the form of direct motions in the House. The Legislative Council, as constituted previous to the Act of 1856, had become highly unpopular; it had also fallen into a state of utter insignificance. By infusing into it the popular element by means of periodical elections, it was galvanised into life and became quite another body in the estimation of the people. The electoral system completely restored its prestige, entitled it to