

take from Upper Canada one-half of the dues on public lands and apply it for the benefit of the Local Government of Lower Canada. (Hear, hear.)

MR. J. B. E. DORION—He never used such language.

MR. WEBB said—MR. SPEAKER, in the consideration of the scheme presented by the Government for the Confederation of the Provinces of British North America, I must say that I find a great deal of difficulty in dealing with it. It appears to me that before asking for a vote, the Government should have come down to the House with a more full and explicit statement of the measure in its entirety, so that honorable members might be able to arrive at a reasonable and just conclusion as to the merits of the case. (Hear, hear.) And I think, sir, that taking into consideration the position in which the greater part of the population are placed who live in the section of country which other honorable gentlemen as well as myself have the honor of representing in this House, this line of argument is of much greater force coming from us than if it had been advanced by the people of any other part of the proposed Confederation. We all know that if this scheme is adopted, the English-speaking part of the population of Lower Canada will be in a very small minority in the Local Legislature; we all know that those who first opened up and settled the country which I allude to spoke the English language, and that the great majority of the people now living there are English-speaking Protestants; and, therefore, when their representatives are called upon to vote for a measure of this kind, which so deeply and intimately affects their future position and prosperity, I believe that all the details of it, all parts of it, should be fully and clearly placed before them, in order that they may know exactly in what position they stand with regard, and how it is to affect the interests they represent. (Hear, hear.) The honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches, in introducing this scheme and asking our assent to it, have thought proper to take a different course; they merely bring down the resolutions which consent to Confederation, reserving the all-important details for future consideration. It may be the right course, but I doubt it very much. (Hear, hear.) Although the Government has not given all the information which I would desire, I do not, however, think that the people of the section of which I am one of the representatives would be justified in opposing a scheme that may prove beneficial generally,

merely because some of their interests may possibly be affected by it. I shall, therefore, vote for the resolutions in your hands, reserving to myself the right of voting for or against the details of the scheme for the local constitution as in my judgment may seem advisable. (Hear, hear.) I consider that by voting for this measure I do not pledge myself to anything more than the general principle of a union of the Provinces of British North America. I admit, sir, that last summer the political affairs of this country were in a state of extreme difficulty, and I admit, too, that it was necessary something should be done to get rid of that difficulty. I would have thought, however, that the Conference which met here in October last, to consider a subject that has been before the people of this country since 1858, would have proposed, for the consideration of the respective legislatures, a legislative union of the British North American Provinces. It appears to me that a legislative union would be far more effective in binding the provinces together, and far more economical than the Federal union proposed. (Hear, hear.) I admit, however, that there may be very great difficulties in bringing about a legislative union, that may not be in the way of a Federal union; and under all the circumstances of the case, the scheme proposed may have been the best that could have been devised. The greatest objection I now have to it is that many of the people do not understand—that its details are not yet fully comprehended by the country. I believe that if hon. gentlemen had come down with the scheme in its entirety—presenting all its details, and the results expected to flow from them—that there would be far less opposition to it than there is in the country and in this House. (Hear, hear.) But as it is now, they call upon the representatives of the people to give their consent to a measure that neither they nor the people thoroughly understand. These objections have been made to the scheme, and in my opinion they have great weight, more particularly in the part of the country which I have the honor to represent. It is not to be wondered at that the English-speaking part of the population of Lower Canada view it with apprehension, or rather have fears in their minds as to the working of it, when gentlemen like the honorable member for Peterborough, who are far removed from any of the difficulties that surround our position, have entertained the same feeling of apprehension. They have thought proper to express doubts and fears as to the