

perial Government from declaring their views upon the subject. I think there would be nothing whatever to prevent our Government from going to England, and offering these resolutions for the consideration of the Imperial Legislature, allowing that Legislature to act upon them as they might think proper; but, at the same time declaring that the law to be passed ought not to come in force in the different colonies until it had been accepted by the legislatures of those colonies. There would be no time lost. It would be as easy for this Parliament to be dissolved and to meet together again in time to take up the consideration of the measure, which Great Britain had in the meantime passed, as it would be to meet again in the summer, and go through the same process. Why is Canada to be treated upon an entirely different rule from that which has been adopted in the other provinces? The Legislature of New Brunswick was dissolved in order that the people might be appealed to on this question. The Hon. Attorney General of Newfoundland has declared that it is the intention of the Government of that colony to appeal to the people upon it, and that nothing will be done until their opinion is obtained. (Hear, hear.) In Nova Scotia, too, the Government do not, as I understand, make it a government question. It is not to be put in that position, and if a difficulty arises in having it adopted by the Legislature, the Government of Nova Scotia are prepared to dissolve their Legislature too. I do not say anything about Prince Edward Island—its acceptance or rejection of the scheme would be of very small account. But their Legislature will, no doubt, also be dissolved, in order that the people may have an opportunity of expressing their opinions upon it, if their House of Assembly is found hostile,—a step which, no doubt, our Government would have taken if this House had shown itself hostile to the measure. Because this House is not hostile, and because Ministers found themselves strong enough to carry it by a large majority, they declared they would take the course they have adopted, although in the other provinces the case has been put on an entirely different footing. (Hear, hear.) Now, sir, let us consider why we should be placed in the same position in which the legislatures and people of the Lower Provinces are placed. We hear it stated on all sides of this House that the whole country is in favor of this measure.

If so, why should there be any hesitation about asking the country to confirm by an election that which is so clearly advantageous and which is so sure to be carried? But, sir, I hear it said, inside of this House and outside of this House, that the people of Lower Canada are opposed to this measure. If that be so then—if they are so strongly opposed to it as has been represented—is it a wise step for us to force it upon them against their will? (Hear, hear.) We are arranging to adopt an entirely new state of governmental existence, and are proposing to embrace a large area of country under this new form of government. We are claiming for it, and desire that it shall have its best and safest foundation in the hearts of the people. And, sir, will you not find it stronger in the hearts and more deeply rooted in the estimation of the people, if you appeal to them and obtain their sanction to it and their support in carrying it out? (Hear, hear.) In proposing that it shall have the sanction of the people, I do not contemplate the absurdity, unknown to our form of government, of asking them for a direct yea or nay upon it. No such thing as that has ever been entertained in my mind. I propose to have it done in a constitutional manner. My whole political history would have shown any man acquainted with it, that there could have been no such democratic idea harbored by me as to go without the walls of the Constitution in order to do an act which could be better done within it. Therefore, any one who had for a moment the belief, that while I was endeavoring to build up, I was at the same time putting forth what may be called a sacrilegious hand to pull down, was very much mistaken as to the course I was to pursue—the only proper and safe course that could be pursued. If you wish to erect this monument of a new nationality on the true feelings and hearts of the people, you must erect it upon an appeal to them. You should not be afraid of it. You may say that difficulties will arise—that other questions will be raised—that the elections will not always turn on the direct issue—for Confederation or against Confederation. But I tell you that it will, if the people are so much in favor of this project as you say. (Hear, hear.) The merits or demerits of the candidates will be passed to one side, and the vote will be taken on the true merits of Confederation—otherwise the people are not worthy of