

could make it a more costly or extravagant system than the one we have now. (Loud cries of hear, hear.) Undoubtedly the mode in which the local governments shall be constructed will very much affect the cost of the whole scheme; but if we adopt (as I earnestly hope we will) simple and inexpensive machinery for local purposes, I am quite satisfied that there will be a reduction to the people of Canada on the amount they now contribute. I have great confidence in the economical effect of placing local expenditures on local shoulders, and in the salutary influence in the same direction, of the representatives of the Maritime Provinces when they come among us.

HON. MR. HOLTON—The trouble is that they will spend our money—not theirs.

HON. MR. BROWN—The honorable gentleman is entirely wrong, and I am amazed at his making such a statement. There is no portion of the community that will pay more money, per head, to the revenue than the people of the Maritime Provinces. If the honorable gentleman had turned up the commercial returns of those Lower Provinces and calculated the effect of our tariff, if applied to them—or even a tariff less than ours, for our tariff must be reduced, he would have known that they will bear their full proportion of the national burdens. (Hear, hear.) But, Mr. SPEAKER, I am told that the arrangement as to the debt is unfair—that we have thrown on the Federal exchequer the whole of the debts of the Maritime Provinces, but only a portion of the debt of Canada. There is not a particle of force in this objection. The whole debt of Canada is \$67,500,000, but five millions of this is due to our own people, to meet which there are certain local funds. Now, if we had thrown the whole \$67,500,000 on the Federal treasury, we must also have handed over to it the local revenues, which, so far as these five millions are concerned, would have been precisely the same thing. But, as regards the public debt with which the Federal Government would start, it would not have been the same thing. By restricting the debt of Canada to \$62,500,000, we restricted the debt of the Maritime Provinces to the same proportion, or \$25 per head of their population; but had we thrown our whole debt of sixty-seven and a half millions on the Confederation, the proportion of debt for the several Maritime Provinces must have been increased, and the whole debt very greatly augmented. (Hear.) But in throwing these five millions on the local governments of Upper and Lower Canada, do we impose a burden on them they

are unable to bear? Quite the contrary—for with the debt, we give them the corresponding sources of revenue from which to meet it. The local governments of Upper and Lower Canada will severally not only have funds from the subsidy and other sources, to meet all expenditure, but a large surplus besides. But, Mr. SPEAKER, I am told that this Federation scheme may be all very right—it may be just and the very thing the country needs—but this Government had no authority from Parliament to negotiate it. The honorable member for Cornwall (Hon. JOHN S. MACDONALD) particularly pressed this objection, and I am sorry he is not in his seat.

HON. MR. HOLTON—It is quite true.

HON. MR. CARTIER—No, the reverse is true.

HON. MR. BROWN—I am astonished to hear such a statement repeated. No one knows better than the honorable member for Chateauguay and the honorable member for Cornwall that in the Ministerial explanations brought down to this House, at the time of the formation of this Government, it was distinctly declared that the Government was formed for the special purpose of maturing a scheme of Federal union, and that it would take means, during the recess, for opening negotiations with the Maritime Provinces, to bring about such a union.

HON. MR. HOLTON—But not to conclude them.

HON. MR. BROWN—What we have done is entirely subject to the approval of Parliament. The honorable member for Cornwall is the very last man who should have raised such an objection, for he attended a caucus of the liberal members of the Assembly, heard the whole plans of the Government explained, precisely as they have been carried out, and he was the very person who moved that I should go into the Government to give them effect. (Hear, hear.)

MR. DUNKIN—And I heard something more said—that nothing should be done which did not leave the House perfectly free.

HON. MR. BROWN—I can assure my honorable friend that, as far as that goes, he never was more free in his life than now. (Laughter.) We do not pretend to say that anything we have done binds this House; any member may object if he pleases; but I do say we received the approval of the House for opening negotiations, and it is a miserable pretence to say anything to the contrary. (Hear, hear.) We did no more than has been done by every Government, under the