

may, there are even left to the people of the different provinces the same large powers for amending them afterwards. To be sure there is the grand power of disallowance by the Federal Government, which we are told, in one and the same breath, is to be possessed by it, but never exercised.

HON. ATTY. GEN. CARTIER—The presumption is, it will be exercised in case of unjust or unwise legislation.

MR. DUNKIN—The hon. gentleman's presumption reminds me of one, perhaps as conclusive, but which DICKENS tells us failed to satisfy his Mr. BUMBLE. That hen-pecked beadle is said to have said, on hearing of the legal presumption that a man's wife acts under his control:—"If the law presumes anything of the sort, the law's a fool—a natural fool!" (Laughter.) If this permission of disallowance rests on a presumption that the legislation of our provinces is going to be unjust or unwise, it may be needed; but under that idea, one might have done better either not to allow, or else to restrict within narrower limits, such legislation. If the promised non-exercise of the power to disallow rests on a presumption that all will be done justly and wisely in the provincial legislatures, the legislative power is well given; but then there is no need, on the other hand, for the permission to disallow. (Hear, hear.) I repeat, this system, or no-system, aims at nothing like uniformity between the general and local constitutions, or between the local constitutions themselves; and in this respect, it is essentially at variance with the much wiser system adopted in the United States. It further allows of no real autonomy; in fact, the only trace of uniformity it can be said to have about it, consists in its disallowance of all autonomy to the provinces. (Hear, hear.) Now, let me take up those few features that undoubtedly are given to us, as characterizing our provincial system. Wide as we have seen the latitude in which the provinces may take in framing their constitutions, there are a few matters as to which the system lays down an iron rule. There is the appointment of a lieutenant-governor which is to be vested in the General Government. It is not said in so many words that he is to be a colonist, but I think it may be taken for granted that he will be. It is not very likely that we shall get any right honorable gentleman or eminent statesman, from home, to come out here for an appointment of that kind; and I take for granted, there-

fore, that the General Government will always nominate Mr. Somebody or other, of local distinction, to this office of lieutenant governor. An hon. gentleman opposite, (I beg his pardon for noticing his gesture,) seems never to have had the thought cross his mind, that perhaps if he were named to it, there might be a doubt in some quarters as to his entire fitness for it. (Hear, hear.) But seriously these lieutenant-governors thus selected, are all to hold office by a very peculiar tenure. They are not to be removable except by the Federal power; nor by it within the term of five years, except for cause, which cause must be stated in writing, and laid before both branches of the Federal Parliament. For five years, therefore, they may be said to hold office during good behaviour. They are to be paid, too, by the Federal power. They are to exercise the reprieving and pardoning power, subject to such instructions as they may receive from the General Government from time to time. And they are to have the initiation, by message, of all money bills, and the power to reserve bills for approval of the Federal Government. They are to have these leading functions of the nominated lieutenant governors under our system, but with one most marked difference—the attribute of non-removability. Beyond these few points, the resolutions leave us all at sea. Save as to these, they leave room, as we have seen, for the widest divergencies of constitution. To be sure, I gather one hint more, not from the resolutions themselves, but from the dispatch sent along with them to the Colonial Secretary, by the Governor General, and this is, that according to the view of our Canadian Government, the provincial legislatures had better be framed on the one chamber principle. I presume this will hardly be gainsayed by the honorable gentlemen who have laid the dispatch before us, and which supplies this feature that we cannot find in the resolutions themselves. Says the dispatch:—

For the purpose of local administration, it is proposed to have in each province an executive officer, to be appointed by the Governor, and removable by him for cause to be assigned, assisted by a legislative body, the constitution of which it is proposed to leave to the decision of the present local legislatures, subject to the approbation of the Imperial Government and Parliament.

But, sir, whether our local legislatures are to be of one house or two, or however other-