

and yet, on the eve of accomplishment, those who have advocated it have not effected a change of the nature that was desired, but have jumped into a new and totally different scheme, that really seems to me to have been brought about for the sole purpose of advancing their own personal aims, rather than satisfying any demand on the part of the people. (Hear, hear.) The honorable and gallant Knight at the head of the Government stated that we were on an inclined plane, and in danger of sliding into the republicanism of the United States. This phrase has been referred to so often by honorable members who have spoken, and so many deductions have been drawn from it, that I may perhaps be permitted to say a few words upon it. I think all must see that the tendency of the scheme now before the House will be in a few years to impose direct taxation upon the people for the support of the local governments. Let us then have direct taxation, and what will be the result? If there is a large expenditure on the part of the General Government, in addition to this taxation, political agitators will arise, who will cry out that the public burdens are unequally borne—(hear)—that two-thirds of the revenue is borne by the people living west of Quebec—that is, the population west of this city will, man for man, pay twice as much to the public exchequer as the population east of it. There will undoubtedly be the same tendency, under such a state of things, as has been charged to exist on the part of the Lower Canadian representatives since the union was formed—namely, a tendency on the part of those who pay the smaller portion of the revenue to spend the public money freely and extravagantly. They will naturally say when any appropriation is proposed for their own section—"We will go for this expenditure, for it will benefit us; and we will support a corresponding expenditure in the other section, because we have not so much to pay of it as the people of that section—we will have only fifty cents to pay of it, while they will have to pay a dollar." This argument will be used in support of all extravagant and wasteful expenditures, and you may depend upon it that they will soon be incurred. Then you will have political agitators who will constantly keep these things before the people, who will demand a dissolution of the union of the provinces as a remedy for the evil. There is a further difficulty will be found in the fact that breadstuffs, the American market for

which will probably be closed, cannot be transported to the Lower from the Upper Provinces without being protected by a heavy import duty. Will the representatives from the Lower Provinces allow that import duty to be imposed? No, undoubtedly they will not. Attempt to carry it in the interest of Upper Canada and you will at once transform the whole of them into advocates for the repeal of the union. Thus you create cause for agitation in all the sections, and it will not long continue until you will again see another dead-lock. You will again have three administrations formed and three general elections occurring within two years, and again you will have sufficient excuse for another change in the Constitution. And you may rely upon it, that before such an agitation goes on five years it will be made an excuse for sliding further down the inclined plane than would have been afforded if we had remained as we were. (Hear, hear.) I cannot help coming to the conclusion, honorable gentlemen, that these resolutions contain the seeds of our destruction as colonies. There can be no political advantage in the proposed union, unless we assume the rights and responsibilities of an independent country. We are not yet prepared for that step. Our population is not numerous enough; we are too young and too weak to assume those rights and responsibilities. We have no commercial advantages to gain by the union. Why then force it upon us? Let it remain for more mature consideration, and the evils you have will be borne the more quietly; but if you force it upon the people prematurely, and the evils I fear spring from it, depend upon it that the public men who press it forward will be as seriously condemned as they are now highly lauded. The fact is, the people of the country do not understand this scheme. How can it be expected that they should understand it in all its bearings? Why, the honorable member from the Rideau Division said he heard the explanations of it and was here a couple of weeks before he understood it, and that he had sent 2000 circulars to his constituents that they might have a knowledge of it. How can he expect them to understand it from these printed documents, when he himself, with the advantage of hearing all the explanations upon it, was two weeks in gaining an understanding of it? Honorable gentlemen, I am in the abstract in favor of the union of these colonies—(hear, hear)—but I do not wish to force on this scheme in a way that is unfair and un-