

these details, and on the whole, I am not sure if my views do not more nearly coincide with those of my hon. friend the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

HON. MR. CAMPBELL—I am very glad to hear my hon. friend say so. I would like him also to state if he goes with the hon. member for Niagara in desiring the delay of a month or delay for a longer period.

HON. MR. VIDAL—That question will be fully answered when I come to touch upon that point. But I may state, that instead of offering a factious opposition by the course I intend taking, it is my loyalty to our Sovereign and country which induces me to support the amendment now before the House, not with the object of defeating this measure, but for securing its adoption on a broader and more permanent basis. How singular are the different views which are taken of our position and powers according to the manner in which we may vote upon this question! In one breath we are told that we are the representatives of the people, and we have a perfect right to vote upon it as we may see fit; and in a few minutes afterwards, we are informed that if we do not vote upon it in a certain manner, we do not represent the people. I cannot possibly reconcile the two statements. It is also said—and it is the only argument I have heard on the point—if indeed it can be called an argument at all—that if the present opportunity of securing the union of the provinces is allowed to pass unimproved, it will be a long time before we may look for another. I admit that the opportunity is one which has been long desired, and one which it will be wise policy to improve; and it will be my humble endeavor to seek to do so to the best advantage. But if the measure is in reality fraught with the benefits which have been claimed for it, I cannot see how it will be jeopardized by a little delay; because the more its benefits are looked into, the better, it is reasonable to suppose, the people will be satisfied with them. I cannot see how the measure will be endangered by giving both the people and their representatives a little longer time to become acquainted with its principles and its details. Since the commencement of the debate in this House, much light has been thrown on the scheme, and we have had the advantage of the explanations in the other Chamber, and I am sure that the minds of hon. gentlemen must now be much better informed on parti-

cular points of the scheme than they were before we came here. For my own part, after having had my mind frequently directed to it, and after having listened attentively to the arguments of all the speakers, I am more and more impressed with the magnitude and importance of the various interests on which our action is invited in this matter, and I think we should proceed cautiously and slowly in taking the step before us—a change so great as that contemplated by the framers of these resolutions—a change amounting to nothing less than, as I before observed, a revolution in the whole system of governing the country. This is a step which, in order to be permanently successful, must rest on the principles of truth and justice, and these principles must be intelligently apprehended by the people to be governed. Notwithstanding all that has been advanced in this chamber—all the assertions which have been made—in reference to the information said to be possessed by the people of this country relative to this measure, I must say that I do not coincide in that opinion. I believe that the people of the country, as a whole, are not acquainted with the details. What new light has there been thrown on the resolutions since we assembled here? Have we not had our attention directed to the fact that even some who assisted in framing the resolutions, did not themselves know precisely what some of them meant? Moreover, is it not the fact that the attention of the country has not to any great extent been called to any arguments against the scheme? Now, in order to a right appreciation of the value and importance of the proposed Confederation, it is right that the people should know and understand both sides of the question. They should not be carried away with the pleasing prospect held out to them of the advantages to be derived from forming part of a great Confederation, without being told at the same time of the cost at which these advantages are to be purchased. And this is all the more necessary because the movement did not originate with the people. All great constitutional changes ought to and usually do originate with the people. But this is an anomaly. Here we have a proposed Constitution framed by a self-elected body—I do not use the term reproachfully, because I hold that these hon. gentlemen did perfectly right in so meeting together—this, I say, is a Constitution which was not framed by a body appointed for the