

the advancement of the age. Is it because certain members of the Council have never been successful in their efforts to be elected for any county whatever, that they wish to deprive the people of the right of electing their representatives? But is it supposed that by giving the Crown the right of appointing legislative councillors, the services of more able, more upright, and more honorable men will be secured, than if the people were allowed to elect them? When the Legislative Council was made elective, those who prepared the law were of the same opinion as the honorable member (Hon. Sir N. F. BELLEAU) that a rich man must of necessity be a man of greater talent than one less blessed with this world's goods, and, in order that the people might not err in their selection, they enacted that every member elected to the Legislative Council should possess at least one thousand pounds in real property; but now, in the scheme of Confederation, that amount is reduced by one-half, and it is thereby admitted that the possession of riches is not an indispensable condition to the possession of talent. The honorable member endeavored to justify the haste with which it is sought to push the scheme of Confederation through, by declaring that Lord PALMERSTON is a very aged man, and that his Ministry is quivering in the balance. So, because the Prime Minister of England is old, we are to be compelled to swallow the pill without even being allowed time to enquire whether it is suited to our case or not. It must be acknowledged that this is a very poor argument. As to the fear of seeing the scheme of Confederation thrown out in England, in case of any change taking place in the constitution of the Imperial Government, I look upon it as entirely chimerical—for if Confederation is acceptable in England and to English interests now, it will be just as acceptable to them eight or ten months hence as it is at present. If the plan is a useful one, in an English point of view, it will be carried out, let what Government may be in power. Then let the people have time to consider of it. The honorable member has stated that there have been twelve elections to the Legislative Council since the question of Confederation has been mooted; but those elections did not take place at a period subsequent to the preparation of the scheme of Confederation, and consequently the people were not and could not be acquainted with the details. The result of

the twelve elections in question was neither favorable nor the reverse to the plan of Confederation, for that plan was not then known. It is said because the plan was distributed throughout the country, that therefore it must be known. But how could it be so, especially in its details, when we every day see the Government greatly embarrassed at giving explanations, or refusing to give them, on certain points?—when, for instance, we see a minister in one House state that the seigniorial indemnity will be paid by Lower Canada alone, whilst it is declared in another House that that debt will be divided between the two provinces?—when we see ministers asking for time to reply to each of the questions put to them respecting this scheme? How can the people be acquainted with the local constitutions and the legislatures, when the ministers themselves would appear to know nothing about them? How can the people know in what matter this five million dollars balance of debt, to be laid upon Canada, will be divided, since those who prepared the scheme themselves do not know? And there is a mass of other important details which ought to be known in order to be able to pronounce upon the merits of the measure, such as the proposed law in relation to education, measures of defence, the Intercolonial Railway, &c. We are told, indeed, for instance, that the Protestants of Lower Canada and the Catholics of Upper Canada will be protected, in so far as relates to their school system, but we have no guarantee of it; and if the scheme of Confederation is adopted before these questions are settled, who can tell us that the Government will have as complaisant a majority to settle those questions as to vote Confederation? There is another part of the scheme which is of the highest importance, and respecting which we are entitled to explanations before voting for it, and that is, the measures to be taken for the defence of the country. It is important that we should know what is to be the nature of the defence which it is proposed to organize and what debt we are to incur for the purpose. Why not let us have the why and the wherefore of the whole business in order that we may come to a sound decision as to the measure. These are details which we ought to have.

HON. SIR E. P. TACHÉ—You will soon have them.

HON. MR. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST—It is stated that the federal union pro-