

that work is accomplished and before we get communication with the Lower Provinces, except through the medium of the St. Lawrence, which is only accessible during the summer time. Then it would be absolutely necessary for us to resort to some other means, to devise some other scheme, by which we might not allow the affairs of these provinces, in the meantime, to be injured, to lag and to suffer; and when our commerce flows in such new channel, it will not be easy to divert it. But is it not the fact that we have been in existence a number of years as a colony here? Is it not the fact, too, that we have been far removed from the sea? Is it not the fact, that when Upper Canada was subject to duties to Lower Canada, and when we had no connection with the United States except by paying high restrictive duties, Upper Canada progressed rapidly and became a large and prosperous province? Did we then complain with all these restrictions weighing upon us? For my part, I have yet to see, if the reciprocity treaty is put an end to and if the bonding system is discontinued, that we would be unable to find means by which the energies of the people of this country would find development. We would still go on in material prosperity, if we found hon. gentlemen forgetting their faction, and allowing the wheels of government to progress without being unnecessarily impeded. (Hear, hear.) In one view of the case, if I were satisfied that the people of this country fully approved of the scheme, I would give it my support, although I disapprove of it in its present shape. But I cannot understand why those hon. gentlemen who have professed, at all events heretofore, to be the advocates of the rights and liberties of the people, should so far forget those rights and liberties as to set them aside, and allow half a dozen gentlemen in this province to combine with a number of gentlemen from the Lower Provinces to completely ignore and set aside the views of those they profess to represent. (Hear, hear.) It has been said that the people of this country have fully endorsed and approved of this measure. But where is the evidence of it? It has been asserted that this is a matter which was under consideration in the year 1858, and that it has been mooted at different times since. But this very fact shews that it has never taken a deep hold on the people, and certain it is

that it has never been made a question up to this time at the polls. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, the people have not pronounced an opinion upon it. And I mean to say this, that if the people understood it was going to cost so much more than the present form of government, they would not be inclined to approve and to accept it as readily as hon. gentlemen seem to think. I hold that, if the hon. gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches were really sincere in their views of the benefits to result from this measure, they would allow the question to go to the people for the fullest consideration. In 1841 the people of this country obtained responsible government, and it was declared to them then that they should have a controlling voice in the affairs of the country—that no important change, in fact, should take place without their having an opportunity of pronouncing upon it. And yet hon. gentlemen now disclaim the right of appeal to the people, and arrogate to themselves an amount of wisdom to suppose that the tens of thousands of people of this province have not the capacity to understand the meaning or the magnitude of this question. They exclude from these men the right of pronouncing an opinion; and is it not singular that it is the people of the province of Canada who are treated in this way? It is not so in the Lower Provinces. New Brunswick, for instance, dissolves its House, and goes to the people. And why should New Brunswick do that which is denied to Canada? Why should the people of New Brunswick be treated as more able and more capable of understanding and pronouncing an intelligent opinion than the people of Canada? (Hear, hear.) The people of Canada, I apprehend, are just as capable of comprehending a measure of this importance as the people of New Brunswick, and they ought to have the same opportunity of pronouncing upon it. (Hear, hear.) The Honorable President of the Council has said that a hostile feeling had arisen between both sections of the province to such a degree, that the government and legislation of the country had almost come to a dead stand. Now, was there such a feeling of hostility existing between the people of the different provinces? Was such the fact? Did honorable gentlemen of French extraction meet honorable gentlemen of British extraction upon the floor of this House with any feeling of hostility whatever? Did we not meet as