

to bear. It has been said that the disposition in England to take part in our defence was owing to the fact that Canada had manifested a disposition also to make provision for defence. Now, supposing we should fail at any time hereafter to bear what may be considered in England a fair proportion of this cost, what would be the consequence? Why, we might be placed again in precisely the same position in which we find ourselves to-day. England might withdraw her troops from this province, and refuse to engage in any defensive works, unless we undertook more than in the opinion of the people of this country we are able to bear; and hence it is my opinion that if it was desirable that this question of Confederation should be submitted to the people at all for their adoption, the first and indispensable step to have taken was to arrange with the Imperial Government the terms and conditions as regards the question of defence upon which we are to enter this new state of political existence. In this sense I do not regret that the scheme, as far as the Lower Provinces are concerned—judging from recent events in New Brunswick and the utterances of public men in the other colonies—is likely to be delayed in its accomplishment; and I am not sorry that the Canadian Government, by this action of the Lower Provinces, will be compelled to consult with the Imperial authorities and arrange with them the proportion we are to bear of the cost of maintaining the defence of the country. (Hear, hear.) It may be almost providential that we are compelled, by the force of circumstances in the Lower Provinces, to take this step now; and I must say that heretofore there has been a disposition manifested on the part of the Government to keep the people in ignorance upon this subject; but I trust that when these negotiations shall have taken place with the Imperial Government, we shall know precisely what the Government has done and what it has agreed to do, and that the exact proportion of expense that we are expected to bear will be laid before this House and submitted to the opinion of the people of this country. (Hear, hear.) I make these remarks, sir, merely because to me the point appears to be a very important one, and because I believe the fullest information will be indispensable to this House in the future discussions that may take place upon this subject. (Hear, hear.) There is another point that has suggested

itself, to which, perhaps, I may be permitted to allude in a few words. I wish to do so without reflecting upon any hon. member of this House; but I cannot help feeling and expressing extreme regret, as a Canadian and a British subject, at the spirit that has characterized this discussion upon Confederation and defence on the part of those hon. gentlemen who support this scheme. Sir, in a British Legislature, where it is proposed to build up a great monarchical constitution on this continent, on the model which has flourished in England, I regret that any honorable gentleman should have found it necessary to charge a seditious and disloyal intention upon all those who cannot agree with them in supporting this scheme. (Hear, hear.) For myself—I say it sincerely and earnestly, though I have boasted less of my loyalty and attachment to the British Crown and Constitution than some hon. members of this House—I think I may say there is no one who loves more than I love the British constitutional system, no man who desires more than I desire to see copied here that British constitutional-monarchical system, and no man who believes more firmly than I believe that it would give to the people of these colonies that greatness, prosperity and freedom that have distinguished the people from whom we have sprung on the other side of the water. (Hear, hear.) But if this debate is considered to be of sufficient importance to have a place among the records of the country—to go down to posterity as the serious utterances of our public men, I think it is a cause of deep regret that hon. gentlemen opposite, in view of that great patriotism of which they have boasted so much, and which they affirm has induced them to sink minor considerations of party and personal antagonism for the sake of carrying a principle of which they profess to be the disinterested and self-denying exponents, have not seen fit, in the discussion of this question, to discuss it like statesmen, and not brand as infamous, traitorous and rebellious those who differ from them in their view of it. (Hear, hear.) I think the people of this country, whether belonging to the Conservative or the Reform party, will feel a deep regret at this; and if there is one thing more than another that indicates that the present like past coalitions is going to result in advantage to the Conservative at the expense of the Reform party—if there is one thing more than another that makes me fear that