

Stirton, Street, Sylvain, Thompson, Walsh, Wells, Willson, and Wright (East York).—59.

NAYS.—Messieurs Cameron (North Ontario), Coupal, Dorion (Drummond and Arthabaska), Dorion (Hochelaga), Dufresne (Iberville), Fortier, Geoffrion, Holton, Houde, Labreche-Viger, Laframboise, Lajoie, Macdonald (Cornwall), O'Halloran, Paquet, Parker, Perrault, Rymal, Scatcherd, and Thibaudeau.—20.

The question being again put on Hon. Mr. Attorney General CARTIER's motion,

HON. MR. DORION said—**MR. SPEAKER**, I hold in my hand an amendment which will exactly suit the ruling of the Chair, as it relates only to the time to which the debate shall be adjourned. The very unfair and arbitrary course which the Government has unfortunately seen fit to pursue, has prevented the honorable members of this House from moving any amendments to the scheme proposed for its adoption; but I for one am most desirous, in accordance with the almost universal wish of the people of the district of Montreal, to have the question tested whether the opinion of the people shall be allowed to be heard before a final decision is come to by this House. I find that in nineteen French-Canadian counties in that district, resolutions have been passed in favor of that course, and petitions have been signed by from fifteen to twenty thousand inhabitants, asking that no such scheme be adopted without submitting it to a vote of the people. (Hear, hear.) Sir, I think it would have been far more dignified on the part of the Government, and more respectful towards the country, to have allowed the scheme—which, in their opinion, will create such prosperity that everybody will be in ecstasies over it, but which, in our opinion, will bring on this country such a state of dissatisfaction as will perhaps engender some other feeling than that of union with the Lower Provinces—to be voted upon by those who are most deeply interested in it, the people of Canada. But they have chosen to gag us, inasmuch that we have no other course left but to move amendments to the motion for adjourning the debate, and that we are determined to avail ourselves of. My motion in amendment is:—

That the debate on this resolution, involving as it does fundamental changes in the political institutions and in the political relations of this province, changes which were not in the contemplation of the people at the last general election, ought, in the opinion of this House, to be adjourned for one month, or until such time as the people of this province shall have an opportunity of con-

stitutionally pronouncing their opinions thereon, by an appeal to them.

I do not fix the time arbitrarily in which the appeal to the people shall be made. If hon. gentlemen are anxious to have the scheme carried at an early day, they can bring on an election at once, or they may take their own time. Let them dissolve the House to-morrow. We are ready for it at any time. The conduct of the Government in reference to the procedure of the House upon the great question they submitted to it, is as disgraceful as it is derogatory to the dignity of this House. After coming to a solemn agreement with the House that the discussion should go on as if in Committee of the Whole, and that consequently amendments might be moved, they now distrust the favorable feeling which they told us at the outset existed among the people, and now they will not allow us to place amendments to the scheme in the Speaker's hands. They fear to have the question discussed and understood among the people. They are wise in their generation. They have just beheld the Hon. Mr. TILLEY—for ten years past at the head of the Government of New Brunswick, and a most deservedly popular gentleman—though uniting with his own strength that of the leaders of the Opposition, swept away by the people. (Hear, hear.) Well may they tremble for the fate of their scheme among the people of Canada. But they do not content themselves with simply refusing an appeal to the people. They go further and refuse the members of this House the opportunity of placing their views before the House and country. We are ready to go to our constituents at once upon the question, and if they say that the scheme is a desirable one, I for one am prepared to bow to the will of the majority. But, sir, to bow to a self-constituted delegation—an association of honorable gentlemen who were never authorised, either by the Parliament or people of this province, to meet together along with gentlemen from other provinces, and concoct a new Constitution for the government of the people, and then to come to this House and say to it, "You must accept this new Constitution in all its details, making no change or amendment, nor even having the privilege of proposing any amendments so as to have them placed on the *Journals* of this House"—I say the demand that we should bow in meek and humble submission to that sort of treatment at the hands of