

and the rights of the electors who sent us here, that I desire to make a very few remarks to explain why I, representing a Lower Canadian division, a majority of whom will be amongst the minority of the Lower Canada of the future, have decided that it is my duty to vote for the resolutions of the Quebec Conference as they have been laid before us by the Government, and consequently against all the amendments. I am free to confess, honorable gentlemen, that there are among the resolutions some that I would have gladly seen, as I conceive, amended; but considering, from the nature of the thing itself, and therefore fully concurring in what many of us heard from an eminent and distinguished statesman in another place, that the whole scheme of Confederation partook of the nature of a treaty, into which, as a matter of course, the spirit of compromise must largely enter; and the Government having, as I also consider they were bound to do, informed us we must accept the scheme as a whole, or reject it as a whole, I conceived it was my duty not to be a bar in the way, however humble, of the passage of the resolutions, and I came to this conclusion the more willingly because I have been for a long time an advocate for a union of the provinces, and I have been so because it is indisputable that a much greater share of our self-defence must rest upon ourselves than heretofore; and though at the best our means of defence may not be as great as we could wish, yet it must be manifest they must be greater by being consolidated under one head. Some hon. gentlemen, especially my neighbor from St. Clair, have ridiculed the idea of Confederation increasing our powers of defence, inasmuch as under the best of circumstances it must take a long time to perfect our arrangements; but I would ask hon. gentlemen to consider what will be the effect in England, as to our defences, if we reject or even postpone this scheme of Confederation, coming as it would on the heels of a rejected Militia Bill. During the discussion, we have had, if the term is parliamentary and may be used, many fancy finance statements. Now, without disputing the correctness of any of them, I would ask the honorable gentlemen who have made them, have they made any calculation as to the costs we would be at after we had been gobbled up by our neighbors south of 45°, or, to use the words of the honorable and gallant Knight the Premier, after we had slid down the inclined plane, and become merged in the neighboring republic? I for one would say that such a position was altogether too contemptible to

occupy. With reference to the change doing away with our elective Legislative Council, of which we have heard so much, I for one can say that I consider the delegates came to the only correct conclusion, and this is no new conclusion, and involves no change of opinion on my part, for I can appeal to an honorable member of this House as to whether, within half an hour of taking my seat in it, I did not express the opinion that though it was not right to speak ill of the bridge over which one had crossed safely, yet that I was opposed to the elective system as applied to this House. I also dissent from the sentiments I have heard expressed by many honorable members of this House as to our position here, for I never understood that I came here as the mere delegate of the men of Inkerman, to vote just as the most active village politicians happened to pull the wires for me. No, gentlemen, I came here, as I thought, as the representative of my division, to do my best according to my humble ability in legislating for the benefit of the whole country, and under no other circumstances would I have accepted the position. I shall not occupy your time, honorable gentlemen, in saying that which has been better said by others; but thanking you for the few moments' hearing you have so kindly given me, conclude by reducing my explanations as follows: I vote for Confederation because I consider it essential to the maintenance of British connection, and to preserve that, I for one am prepared to make many sacrifices. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. BLAKE—I feel it to be my duty, honorable gentlemen, to make a few remarks upon the general question of Federation before the vote is taken. A great deal has been said about the manner in which the scheme has originated. It has been said that the honorable gentlemen composing the Conference were self-elected. Now I hold that it is most unfair to charge honorable gentlemen who have, as members of a government, entered into this matter at the request of His Excellency the Governor-General, with a sincere desire to do the best that could be done for the interests of Canada, with being too precipitate, especially when the subject was surrounded with so much difficulty. Although I have been an advocate of a union of the provinces for very many years, yet I am fully prepared to admit that there are some matters of detail in those resolutions that are very distasteful to me. I refer particularly to the abandonment of the elective principle in the constitution of this branch of the Legislature.