

1858, that honorable minister entered the Government with the express understanding that the question would be dealt with. It is well known that he carried his point so far, that the subject was alluded to at the close of the session of 1858, in the Speech of Sir E. HEAD, the Governor General, and communication with the Imperial Government for permission to negotiate with the Lower Provinces on the subject was then undertaken. Shortly after this, three members of the Government, viz., Hon. Messrs. CARTIER, GALT, and myself, went to England, and on the 25th of October, 1858, we laid our request before the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir E. B. LYTTON, but difficulties, not of our creation, intervened and caused delay—Lord DERBY's Government was defeated, and the matter continued in abeyance. To say, in the face of the facts I have stated, that the project is unknown and has taken the country by surprise, is to say what is not the case. Even last year it was distinctly referred to in His Excellency's Speech at the close of the Session, and Hon. Messrs. BROWN, McDougall and MOWAT entered the Government with the express understanding that negotiations were to ensue to bring about the proposed Federation. Hon. Messrs. BROWN and MOWAT went back to their constituents and were re-elected by acclamation, and although Hon. Mr. McDougall was defeated, he too was subsequently elected for another constituency by acclamation. These gentlemen, instead of being decried and assailed for the part they have acted, should be honored for their patriotism. There has been no such thing as surprise. The resolutions were sent to all the members of the Legislature shortly after they were fully settled upon, and even before that the plan was published in all the newspapers of the province, and I am at a loss to know how it could have been made more public. It is true the Opposition have not held public meetings to consider or object to the scheme, but the reason of this is, that the majority in its favor is so enormously large that they did not venture to do so. (Hear.) The next piece of disingenuousness on the part of the honorable member was in stating the military power of the Lower Provinces at 65,000 fighting men, or in limiting to that number the men competent for military service—

HON. MR. CURRIE—No; I said 128,000, of whom 65,000 only were available, the rest being engaged on the water.

HON. MR. ROSS—Why did not the honorable member candidly state their census population, which at this time cannot be much short of a million souls?

HON. SIR E. P. TACHÉ—With the permission of the honorable member I will state the result of my experience in this matter. I have been for some time attached to the Adjutant General's office, where I had the opportunity of examining the particularly correct returns of the Militia for Lower Canada, and it always appears that out of a given population of both sexes the one-fifth part shows the exact number of men, between the ages of 18 and 60, fit for military duty. This is the case all the world over. The law is as uniform as that which determines the relative numbers of the two sexes; in all Christian countries the males being 21 and a fraction to 20 females, while in countries where polygamy exists the case is exactly reversed, the females being 21 and a fraction, and the males 20. I have verified the fact that one-fifth of our population shows the correct number of militia-men, and if the honorable member (Hon. Mr. CURRIE) will apply to the Adjutant General he will find it was so.

HON. MR. CURRIE—I have taken the figures as furnished by a colleague of the honorable member.

HON. SIR E. P. TACHÉ—Then my colleague must be in contradiction with myself. The number of militia-men in Upper Canada, by the last census, was 280,000, which, multiplied by 5, gives the population, with a few to spare.

HON. MR. ROSS—I think it is now unnecessary for me to say anything else on this subject, as the honorable member has been fully answered by my honorable friend the Premier. All that I need add is that according to the rule now stated, the million of souls in the Lower Provinces would produce 200,000 instead of 65,000 men, all capable of bearing arms, those employed on the water being as liable to serve as those employed on the land. I trust we shall never require to muster our fighting men from any part of the proposed Confederation; but the best preventative of danger is preparedness to meet it. (Hear.) The honorable member next came to the question of the Intercolonial Railway, which after all seems to be his great peculiar horror—the great pillar which overshadows and oppresses him. Well, I will turn again to Lord DURHAM's report, in which the following passage, remarkably apposite to the subject, appears:—