

large majority of French population, and in Moncton there was a large majority of English. In both those places the law operates without any class distinctions at all. The people have become amalgamated, and you cannot distinguish the French from the English. The French have always taken care of their own poor, and the English have never been assessed for a single dollar for their support. As they provided for their own poor they thought it a hardship to be assessed to support the poor of the Parish. To avoid this a Bill was passed to allow them to elect their assessors and overseers the same as we do. It only drew a visionary line between the English and French: they had the same general law, only each party elected their own officers. This did not have the effect of making a distinction of race, but had operated well, and everything had been carried on in harmony and good feeling.

Mr. KERR was entirely opposed to the principle of this Bill, but as it had been introduced into Westmorland, he thought the French inhabitants of Northumberland were entitled to the same privilege.

Hon. Mr. WILMOT could not understand how his hon. friend could vote for it if it was wrong in principle. If they had done wrong in other Counties, he should endeavor to put a stop to it.

Progress was then reported upon the Bill.

HON. MR. FISHER'S RESOLUTION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE UNION OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

Hon. Mr. FISHER.—In bringing a resolution before the House I have generally found it necessary to offer some arguments why it should pass, but I feel on this occasion that very few observations are required. I do not feel disposed, at this hurried season of the year, to occupy the time of the House to convince them of what they are already convinced of, for this is not a new proposition. When we reflect upon the history of the past, we all know that this question has been discussed by the people of the country in all its bearings, and their representatives come here charged with their opinion upon this question. I do not intend to occupy the time of the House beyond two or three minutes. We know that the question of the Union of British North America has been in the minds of the people of this country for twenty-five or thirty years. About three years ago propositions were made for the Provinces to discuss this question, and a Scheme of Union was agreed upon. The Legislature of Ca-

nada, in both its departments, have passed upon this question, and it has been discussed in this Province. The general election has been held in order to test the minds of the people of the country upon the Union of British North America. I think it is gratifying to all of us that the people of this Province were so unanimous upon this question as they really were. The proposition which I have to make now is in the resolution, and I know that a large majority of the people are in favor of the measure. The Government are anxious that past differences should be forgotten. Much political strife and bitterness will arise in deciding a question of this kind, but we hope the result we have arrived at will advance the interest of all. The basis of any arrangement for the Union of these Provinces will be the Resolutions adopted at Quebec. That matter has been discussed throughout the Provinces, and objections have been made to different portions of it. What we propose to do is, to get as many improvements made to it as we possibly can. This resolution proposes that we should ask the Governor to appoint Delegates to unite with Delegates from the other Provinces in arranging with the Imperial Government for the Union of British North America upon such terms as will secure the just rights and interests of New Brunswick, accompanied with provision for the immediate construction of the Inter-Colonial Railway—each Province to have an equal voice in such Delegation, Upper and Lower Canada to be considered as separate Provinces. There are two principles in the resolutions adopted at Quebec, about which there will be very little discussion, that is the principle of Federation and the principle of representation by population. The finance arrangements, and the arrangements regarding the Legislative Council will be considered, and upon these points it will be the endeavor of the Government to secure as favorable terms as they possibly can. Another proposition in this resolution is, that not only our just rights and interests are to be secured, but there is a provision for the immediate construction of the Inter-Colonial Railway. This proposition is conveyed in as strong language as can be written, and it lies at the bottom and forms the basis of any arrangement that may be made. I am not going to occupy the time dilating upon the advantages of Union. If we want arguments in favor of Union let us look at the neighboring country, and see the blood and treasure which they have spent in preserving their Union. Here we are in a sort of transition state; we

are now about to make arrangements to form a Union of the different North American Provinces under the care of the British Government. We are going to develop our national resources, consolidate our varied interests, and secure measures for our common and mutual defence. The country have declared themselves unmistakably in favor of Union, and it is our wish and determination to meet the objections of the smallest minority in every way in order that when this Union is consummated it will not only provide the greatest good for the greatest number, but that the smallest number will have no reason to complain.

Mr. SMITH—I suppose it is expected that I will make some observations. I believe I express the feeling of every hon. member on the floors of the House, and every man throughout the country, when he comes to know of the speech of the hon. mover of the Resolution on a subject so important, when I say I expected a more detailed explanation of the policy of the Government. The object is to conceal what the Government intend to do. While I am prepared to admit that the people of the country have adopted the principle of Union, it has been done by agencies with which it is not necessary for me to deal. Fenianism is one of the agencies that has acted upon the public mind, and it has also been acted upon by the treacherous unconstitutional conduct of the Governor. By these means the Government have obtained a majority, and I bow, as I have always done, to the will of the people. I believe that unless this Scheme of Confederation is accomplished in a short time, the reaction upon this Scheme will be more powerful than it ever has been. Public opinion is very uncertain. I see many of my hon. friends here with whom I have sat side by side and contested many a political battle, but they have not been here continuously, but have been out and in according to the fluctuations of public opinion. I came here fourteen years ago, and I only see one hon. member (Mr. Kerr) who has been here continuously since that period except myself. This proves the uncertainty of public opinion, and we cannot tell what another election may bring forth. As this question has now been determined by the people, we should endeavor, as far as practicable, to obtain for this country every possible concession promotive of its interest in this Confederation. I believed from the first that this Scheme was fraught with peril, and I relaxed no effort on my part to prevent its inflection upon the country. I do not regret the course I have taken, although my efforts have been unavailing. If this Union is pro-