

form of union that will meet the approval of the people, and be perpetuated. Looking at this change that is considered so necessary, let us enquire what events have brought it about. Let honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches answer for me, and we will find that it has been the cry that retrenchment was absolutely necessary—that if we did not have retrenchment, or give to Upper Canada that fair control over the expenditure of our income that she ought to have, in consequence of her contributing so much more to the revenue, there would be a revolution. That was the way in which the Hon. President of the Council, for party and political purposes, chose to discuss this matter while he was in opposition. Not that there was really any danger of revolution, but because there was justice in the cry, they used strong language to give effect to their argument. Now, I would like to understand and I have not yet been able to understand from any member of this House who has been advocating representation by population—whether there was any reason for believing that we could not have got that constitutional change just as well as we can get this one. It was party feeling that kept the people apart, yet that party feeling was swamped in a moment when the leaders of the parties brought their heads together, and declared that it should no longer exist. They united for the avowed purpose of remedying the difficulties under which the province labored, and for the purpose of giving the people of Upper Canada their rights; and they say this is to be accomplished by a Federal union. They might as well have formed a union for a more economical object—for the purpose of forming a Legislative union between the provinces. It may be said that hon. gentlemen of French extraction from Lower Canada were so determined to resist the demands of Upper Canada, that the rights of that section of the province could never have been obtained, unless by a Federal union of the colonies. I think, however, that they are men of intelligence, and that if they found Upper Canadians were true to their determination to contend for their rights until they should be obtained, the result would have been very different from what it has been. Hon. gentlemen from Lower Canada, of French origin, must have seen that they were liable to be swept away at any moment that there should be a union between the British of Lower and of Upper Canada. If the issue had been

placed fairly and equally before them; if they had been brought to see that matters had arrived at such a state that it was absolutely necessary that some change should take place—the people of the Eastern Townships and of the eastern part of Upper Canada standing ready to be banded together against them—they would have seen that the elements on the floor of this House were such as would force upon them either a legislative union with the Lower Provinces, or representation by population in Canada alone. Whether a legislative union, with representation by population as a basis, could have been obtained from the Lower Provinces or not, I am not prepared to say; but I am given to understand that the people of the Lower Provinces advocated a legislative union as strongly as those of Upper Canada, and that they were about to carry out a legislative union among themselves. Now, if Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland were willing to go into a legislative union with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, I do not see why the proposal to bring in an additional province should have effected so complete a change in their views. I am satisfied that if the gentlemen who represented the interests of Upper Canada had set themselves about trying to get that which would have been best for their people, and had endeavored to enforce the rights of Upper Canada, they would have accomplished that which would have been of more service to the people of the united provinces, and which would have placed beyond chance or possibility those contentions which will necessarily result so soon as you have individualized those provinces by giving each a Local Legislature. By this scheme you will have increased the burdens of the people, and in so doing will have increased their opportunity for discontent. You have given to the general and local legislatures coördinate jurisdiction, or at least have given them the right to legislate on the same questions, and, in thus placing in their hands an element of contention, have shewn that you are not building up a firm and stable government. (Hear, hear.) Now it is said that one of the strongest reasons for union is found in the necessity of placing our common country in a position of defence, but I do not see why we cannot make arrangement for a defence under our present government. Let us be told what it is that is required of us, and see whether the different legislatures will not vote the