

your committee strenuously recommend to the Liberal party of Lower Canada the propriety of seeking for a solution of the present difficulties in a plan of Confederation, the details of which should be so matured as to meet the approbation of a majority of the people of this province, and, in order to further this, and to promote the most ample discussion of the subject as well in Parliament as throughout the country.

It may be said in reply, that this document refers only to the Federation of the Canadas. The scheme before the House provides for that most fully; but if the principle be good as regards Canada, it will be equally beneficial as regards the other British North American Colonies. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member from Wellington, in the very able speech which he delivered the other day, and to which all who heard him must have listened with very great pleasure, enunciated his views in his usual forcible and lucid style; and whether there is a coincidence of opinion with him or not, one cannot but respect the intelligence, moderation and candor with which he expresses his views. (Hear, hear.) I trust that in giving my opinion upon some points of his remarks I shall be guilty of no want of courtesy although differing from him. (Hear.) The hon. gentleman, at the outset of his remarks, said that this Constitution, in order to be strong, "must be planted deep in the hearts and affections of the people," and that "there would be no good hope of its permanency without this." So true and correct is this position, that if I did not believe, honestly believe, that the Constitution which we are now discussing commanded the approbation of a large majority of the people—I am speaking now more particularly of the section of the province to which I belong—I would be one of those to advocate our delaying its passage until we ascertained beyond all doubt what the feelings of the people are; but I think there is no reasonable ground to doubt what their views are. (Hear, hear.) They were shown, in the first place, as pointed out by my honorable friend the Commissioner of Crown Lands, in the fact that nearly all the elections of members of this and the other branch of the Legislature that have taken place since the formation of the Government, have resulted in its favor. That, I think, is very strong testimony of the popular approbation. (Hear, hear.) Then we have no petitions against it. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. CURRIE—And none for it.

HON. MR. CHRISTIE—"None for it," the hon. gentleman says. Why, the country has demanded the scheme for years. (Hear, hear.) What have I been proving to the House but that the very party of which the hon. gentleman is a member resolved upon this in 1859. I do not think the feelings of that convention in its favor could have been more distinctly expressed. I certainly so understood it, and a large majority of the 560 gentlemen present so understood it. (Hear, hear.) It has been before the country in Lower Canada since 1856, when our friends from Lower Canada formally brought it before Parliament. Are there any petitions from Lower Canada now against it? (Hear, hear.) Are there any from Upper Canada? Has there been a single public meeting in either section against it? (Hear, hear.) In Lower Canada, an hon. member says, there have been two or three. It has been said—I do not declare it, but make the statement on public rumor—that they were failures, small demonstrations of opposition. But in Upper Canada we have had no demonstration whatever against it. An indirect attempt was made the other day at Toronto by an effort to condemn the Intercolonial Railway in connection with Confederation, but it was a manifest failure. (Hear, hear.) I think, then, that we are justified in assuming—and, indeed, are bound to assume—that the people do not object to it, and that they fully understand its character; for in spite of what may be said to the contrary, it has gone through the length and breadth of the land, having been widely circulated by every newspaper in the country; and it is a flimsy argument for honorable gentlemen to use, that because the resolutions addressed to them were marked "Private," they could not be communicated to the public. (Hear, hear.) They have been spread all over the country; but we are told the entire press has been subsidized by the Government. To say that the press was influenced in any manner by the circular to which allusion has been made, is absolutely ridiculous. (Hear, hear.) There are a few newspapers in either section of the province—certainly there are few in Upper Canada—that have spoken against the scheme; but nine-tenths of them in both sections are in favor of it, and have discussed it in all its bearings—yet we are told that the public has not been sufficiently informed upon it, that in fact there is no public opinion in