

did before the three Conservative members from Upper Canada, who retired in favor of the three Grit members, left it. The Government then all belonged to one political party, were all consistent members of that party, and taken together, were equal in talent to any Administration that has ever had charge of the affairs of this or any other province. All holding the same views on leading political questions, even those who opposed them could not but feel a very large degree of respect for them as sincere, honest, consistent Conservatives, and as I believe, entertaining sound political principles. But the introduction of the three other members altered the whole face of the Government. And the first thing this unholy alliance does is to go to work at the suggestion of the chief with the still, small voice to upset our Constitution. (Hear, hear.) When a great constitutional question comes before this House, designed as it is to sweep an entire constitution from our Statute Book, and replace it with another, I think you will agree with me, honorable gentlemen, that this is one of the most important measures that could come from any government on the face of the earth. (Hear, hear.) Well, I would ask those people who are so anxious to see responsible government carried out in this country in its integrity, is this a government that you can recognize as representing the well-understood wishes of the people? A government claiming to be a responsible government ought to have for its basis returns made from the polls, and ought not to have its origin through the instrumentality of ministerial convenience. (Hear, hear.) I would like to ask if, at the last general election, this subject was mooted to the people in any section of the province?—whether it was a subject to which the slightest reference was ever made by the votes of the people when they returned their representatives? I do not think that it could have been, because it is a measure that has emanated from the particular individual to whom I have referred, since the TACHÉ-MACDONALD Government got into that unfortunate political dilemma. The people were not aware at the last general election that any such measure as this was to come before the Legislature. Honorable gentlemen, I would not stand up here and speak in this manner if the subject brought under our consideration was any ordinary measure which could be passed this session and repealed at the next, if found unsatisfactory. But these resolutions, if adopted by all the legislatures, will become embodied in an

Imperial Act, and the people of Canada will find some difficulty in having any change made in respect to them. The power that creates Confederation, by passing the act for that purpose, will be the only power by which any change can be effected in that act. Therefore, after passing these resolutions, it will be out of our power to alter them in the least degree. This, honorable gentlemen, is one of the reasons why I have refrained from addressing the House until the resolution which has just been proposed by my honorable friend from the Niagara Division should be brought forward. I would take this opportunity of saying that I do not think the observation made by an honorable gentleman, to the effect that it would be in bad taste for this House to suggest a dissolution of the other branch of the Legislature, should have any influence in disposing of the amendment now before us. Why, honorable gentlemen, there is nothing of the kind in the amendment. We argue for delay, and we are perfectly willing you should delay the measure until after the next general election. But, if the Government think that delay will be so dangerous to the measure, there is a constitutional remedy open to them, which, of course, it would not be proper for me to refer to in a more pointed manner. I do not argue for a week or a month's delay. I think there ought to be a much longer time allowed. I think the question ought to be submitted to the people of this country for their approval. I do not want the thing to be gone about in a peddling kind of style, one honorable gentleman running here and another there, and endeavoring in that way to learn the views of his constituents. If we cannot have the usual constitutional mode of arriving at the true views, opinions, and impressions of the people in relation to the scheme, I do not want any delay at all. I do not want the opinion of the people taken, unless it can be done in such a manner as will give us something upon which we can depend. If an honorable gentleman consults the electors in one portion of his constituency and they are opposed to the scheme, while those of another section of the same constituency are in favor of it, he is no better off than when he began. Nor do I believe in taking a vote of the constituencies, "yea or nay," on the measure, in the manner in which the people have to vote with reference to stopping the supply of intoxicating drink under the Temperance Act. (Laughter.) I go for the whole British constitutional mode, or nothing. I have no idea of wishing to see honorable gentlemen going