

Here, then, is the solution of the enigma; here, then, is the reason why Federal union is worthless—without us there is no country—it is no longer the doctrine: “*Let the country perish rather than a principle be abandoned,*” but “*let the country perish rather than a political party should succumb.*” It is less absurd, but at the same time less noble, and if it be not cynical in words, it is so undoubtedly in conception. (Hear, hear.) What! must we resist in future all progress, all strength and national greatness, solely because a party, which exhausted itself almost at its birth, thinks it cannot discern in the new order of things the stepping stones to power? But is it our fault that the doctrines and the acts of that party are not in accordance with the feelings of the country, and that the country persists in discountenancing them? The hon. member for Hochelaga would hope more for his party in a Confederation of the two Canadas only; he has said to himself, no doubt, “In this last order of things the increase of the Upper Canadian representation would augment the Radical majority of Upper Canada, and that majority, added to the small minority I command, would have placed me in a position to rule Lower Canada as I have already done, against its will, and in spite of my former declarations.” Either he must think us very blind, or else he must expect that placing the question in a party point of view, he would rally around him only those who, leaving aside all national sentiments, follow him nevertheless. (Hear, hear.) But the extract which I have just now read brings us naturally to the question of an elective Legislative Council, to which system the honourable member for Hochelaga grants a great degree of superiority over the nominative one. Just now he told us that the Council nominated by the Crown had fallen into imbecility, and had lost public respect. (Hear, hear.) Now, to prove how logical he is, he tells us:

It is true that the House of Lords, Conservative though it be, finds itself removed from all popular influence; but its numbers may be increased upon the recommendation of the responsible advisers of the Crown, if such a measure were to become necessary to obtain the concurrence of both Houses, or to prevent a collision between them. The position which its members occupy in it establishes a sort of compromise between the Crown and the popular element. But this new House, after Confederation, will be a perfectly independent body; its members will be nominated for life, and their number cannot be increased. How long will this system work

without bringing about a collision between the two branches of the Legislature? Let us suppose the Lower House composed in a great part of Liberals, for how long a time would it submit to an Upper House named by Government?

Be kind enough to observe, Mr. SPEAKER, that under the old system, the Legislative Council possessed the same elements of existence as the House of Lords, and that the Crown could increase its numbers at need; it augmented it in 1849, as it threatened to augment the House of Lords in 1832. Observe, again, that it is precisely this control exercised by the Crown over the Upper House that the hon. gentleman found so fatal to legislation previous to 1856. But there is a more rational manner of appreciating the part sustained by the House of Lords in the British Constitution. No one denies to the Sovereign the abstract right of increasing at will the House of Lords; but such right has never been exercised but for the purpose of rewarding men distinguished for great national services; and when, in 1832, WILLIAM IV. granted Earl GREY the tremendous power to swamp the representative body of the great landed nobility, it was because the country was moving with rapid strides towards revolution, and because there remained to the Sovereign but two alternatives, either to lessen the moral weight of the House of Lords, or to see his own throne knocked to pieces from under his feet. (Hear, hear.) To convince the House that I do not exaggerate, I will read an extract from LINGARD'S *History of England*:—

It is known that justice and common sense were wounded by the electoral system of England, when such a rock, such a building, such a hamlet belonging to noble families sent representatives to Parliament, where cities of 100,000 inhabitants were not represented, where corporations of twenty or thirty individuals had a right to elect members for large cities, and so forth. All this was the consequence of a social order, founded on privilege, and in which property was the mistress of all power. To reform the electoral system was then to make an attempt not only on the Constitution, but society. And the Tories offered a desperate resistance. Such was their attitude, that the Ministry proclaimed Parliament dissolved on the 11th May, 1831, a course which was joyfully welcomed by the people. New elections were had, and resulted in a ministerial majority. The Reform Bill was adopted by the Commons, but the House of Lords threw it out by a majority of forty-one votes. The intelligence of this result was received throughout the three kingdoms with the most lively agitation,