

presenting the people in the other House—the change does not amount to a disfranchisement. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. AIKINS—If the honorable gentleman had not been quite so sensitive, I would have saved him the trouble of making his explanation.

HON. MR. MACPHERSON—I did not wish to be misrepresented.

HON. MR. AIKINS—It certainly is not my desire to misrepresent the honorable gentleman in any manner. I think the conclusion one would arrive at, after hearing his remarks upon the point, is that the people would still, after this proposed change in the Constitution, have the power to make appointments to this House.

HON. MR. MACPHERSON—No, but through their representatives.

HON. MR. AIKINS—The honorable gentleman says they will have the power, through their representatives, to make their appointments. Well, after reading the fourteenth resolution, it does appear to me that, after the first election of the Chamber, the people will have nothing at all to do with it. (Hear, hear.) The honorable gentleman says, however, that the representatives of the people will have the power of making these appointments. Who are the representatives of the people he refers to? The members of the Government, who will have this power; or, in other words, the Crown will make the appointments.

HON. MR. MACPHERSON—With the advice of the representatives of the people.

HON. MR. AIKINS—Yes, undoubtedly; but the people, nevertheless, will have nothing at all to do with the matter; we advert again, in fact, to the old principle when the Crown made all the appointments. (Hear, hear.) Now, with regard to this question, I feel myself in this position, that although I may be in favor of the Crown making these appointments—upon which principle I express no opinion at this moment—if I voted for these resolutions I would give a vote, and every member of this House would give a vote, by which they would give themselves seats in this House as long as Providence thought fit to let them remain. (Hear, hear.) I came here, honorable gentlemen, to conserve certain interests, to represent certain classes, and to reflect the views of those who sent me here so far as they accorded with my own judgment. But they did not send me here to change the Constitution under which I was appointed, and to sweep away at one dash the privileges

they possess, one of which is, to give a seat in this House to him in whom they have confidence. It does not appear right to me that the members of this House should declare, by their own votes, that we shall remain here for all time to come. (Hear, hear.) The reasons given for the proposed change are various, and to some extent conflicting. We find one member of the Government telling us that it is because the Maritime Provinces are opposed to an elective Chamber, and hence we in Canada—the largest community and the most influential—give way to them, and set aside a principle that was solemnly adopted here, and so far has worked without prejudice to our interests. We find another gentleman, who, when the question came up years ago, strongly opposed the elective principle, quite as strongly opposes it now, because since then certain municipalities have borrowed more than they are able to pay! These are somewhat extraordinary reasons, and I trust the House will give them their due weight. I think, honorable gentlemen, that prior to the proposed change taking place, we ought not to declare by our own votes that we are entitled to permanent seats in this House,—without, at any rate, knowing whether the people consent to it or not; and I do not think I am wrong in using this line of argument, when we have reason to believe that, even if the Crown-appointed members remain here, a large number of the elected members will also remain.

HON. MR. ROSS—How would you act if you were satisfied that the whole public opinion was in favor of it?

HON. MR. AIKINS—I can very easily answer the honorable gentleman. If I did not and could not reflect the views of my constituents on such an important subject as this, there is one thing I could do, return to them the power they placed in my hands. (Hear, hear.) That is the course I should feel compelled to take under such circumstances. (Hear, hear.) With regard to this scheme altogether, I think that a very great deal depends upon the resolutions themselves. If we are to have framed a new Constitution upon them as a basis, all of them, in my opinion, should be thoroughly canvassed and examined; and this House, as well as the other branch of the Legislature, ought not to be prevented by the Government of the day from expressing its opinions with regard to their merits. (Hear.) It is said by many honorable gentlemen that the people are in favor of this scheme. I think the people are in favor of a scheme