

of the local governments." But let us note the contradiction in this on the part of the Government, and how illogical its conduct is. Let us for a moment suppose that this measure gives rise to difficulties in the Cabinet, during the discussion on the details of the scheme, of sufficient importance to entail the resignation of the Administration. What happens? The Address having been voted by our Legislature, is sent to England, and whilst the Imperial Government is engaged in ratifying it and incorporating it in a bill, which is to become our Constitution, the present Ministry succumbs under the details of the scheme respecting the local governments. A new ministry succeeds them, an appeal to the people probably takes place in the interval, and when the new Constitution comes to us from Great Britain, we have a Government and a Legislature ready to reject it before its promulgation. In view of such a prospect as this, ought we to be in a hurry to accede to the request of the Government and refuse the legitimate delay asked for by the motion now before this Honorable House? I have, then, considered that I ought not to pass over in silence the declaration of the hon. member for Toronto, for I am of opinion that it is of a nature to convince us that precipitation in so highly solemn a matter is most dangerous. The Constitution of a country should not be changed from base to summit until those who are appointed to watch over the public interests, and the very Constitution in question, have had time to see and to ascertain, in a positive manner, that such a change is necessary and called for by the people. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. OLIVIER—Honorable gentlemen, in again rising to address the House, I beg to assure you that I do not propose to repeat the observations I have already made on a previous occasion; but being pressed for time, I was obliged to omit to refer to certain aspects of the scheme on which I proposed to offer a few remarks when the present motion should be before the House. I was aware that this motion would come up for discussion, as it appeared upon our *Minutes of Proceedings*. With these few preliminary observations I shall proceed, honorable gentlemen, to offer a few remarks on some few points in the scheme which I was compelled to pass over in silence on the occasion of my first address on the plan of Confederation now submitted

for our consideration. I must refer here, honorable gentlemen, to a wonderful incident of this afternoon's sitting. A declaration, novel in every respect to each one of us, fell from the lips of the Honorable the Minister of Crown Lands, who has only had this one sole reason to offer us in explanation of, and excuse for, the precipitate haste with which his Government is endeavoring to obtain the adoption of the new Constitution:—"We are anxious to obtain the vote of this House, to transmit it to New Brunswick and to the other Maritime Provinces which are to enter into the Confederation." This, then, is the real reason of this incomprehensible and indecent haste, for I cannot believe that the reason given by the hon. member who sits immediately opposite to me (Sir N. F. BELLEAU), in explanation of this haste, can be a serious one. It is difficult, indeed, not to consider as somewhat absurd the reason alleged by the Hon. Sir N. F. BELLEAU:—"The Ministry are anxious that this scheme should be adopted forthwith, because Lord PALMERSTON is already an old man, and might die at any moment." I would rather accept the reason given by the Hon. Minister of Crown Lands than that of my honorable friend, because I cannot believe he was authorized to give it. Thus this House and the country now know the secret of this precipitate haste on the part of the Government, and I have no doubt they will bear it in mind. But I will venture to enquire of the Honorable the Minister of Crown Lands, who has given us this very absurd reason, whether he hopes to deceive the people of the Lower Provinces by the vote which he desires to precipitate. I will ask him whether it is to be desired that this House should forthwith give a vote on this question, a vote which will undoubtedly have the effect of leading them into error as regards the feelings and opinions of the people of this country in relation to the project of Confederation. Well, honorable gentlemen, I do not for one moment hesitate to declare to this House, that the fact alone of the anxiety of the Government to obtain forthwith a vote of this House on this important measure, is that which ought most of all to put us on our guard, and ought to cause us to determine not to give it lightly, and in a manner unworthy of prudent and wise legislators. Indeed, honorable gentlemen, our vote will have a significance which it will be vain to seek to diminish.