

also, have supported them in this scheme of union. The Government, thus sustained, soon began to act, and their first movement was to take the provincial steamer and go off to Prince Edward Island. I remember well standing on the bank of the river at Rivière du Loup, seeing the steamer pass down, and I wished them God-speed. They went to the Conference at Charlottetown, and I have no doubt they acted in a manner worthy of gentlemen going to propose a union. We know too that they were well received. There had been a growing love in these provinces towards Canada for some time. This was manifested when they gave an invitation to this Legislature to visit them, after the close of last session. And I only regret that the Legislature—every member of it—did not accept that invitation. Those who did, came back much better informed than when they went there. We had the satisfaction of seeing those who probably are going to be our partners in this union. And I do assure you, that for one, I can speak of the people of the Lower Provinces, as an energetic, active, industrious people, quite equal to ourselves. (Hear, hear.) And, as regards the resources of these provinces, I had no idea of them approaching the reality, before I paid that visit. We saw farms there on the banks of the River St. John, quite equal to any farms in our western peninsula, which is called the garden of Canada. The members of the Conference at Charlottetown, as I understood, after discussing the whole question, and arriving at something like an understanding, returned to their respective governments, and arranged to have a Conference, representing in a more official manner all the provinces. Some gentlemen have objected that this was an unauthorized, self-constituted Conference. But I believe, it can be shewn that they had the express authority of the British Government for entering into these negotiations. The Lower Provinces sent members of their several governments, and they did more—they appointed the leaders of the Opposition to accompany them—so that the people of those provinces were fully represented. They did, in fact, what was equivalent to that which has been done in Canada, where our coalition Government represents both classes of politics. The able statesmen, composing the Conference which assembled at Quebec, thus represented the whole people of these provinces. It has been objected that it was impossible that a Conference, meeting only for a few days, could have devised a measure that would be of a

character which we could accept. But, honorable gentlemen, when men meet together honestly to carry out a purpose, they can do a great deal in a very short time. (Hear, hear.) And I believe the gentlemen composing the Conference which assembled here in this city were men of honest purpose, and earnestly bent on framing a Constitution that would be for the best interests of our country. We cannot expect it to be infallible, because no human act is such; but it is of such a character that I do not think we can ever have another opportunity, if this is let slip, of receiving again a document so well calculated to answer the ends designed. There could be no merely party government either here or in the Lower Provinces which could produce a document that would be so acceptable, or ought to be so, to the whole people. (Hear, hear.) I think it is unfair to make comparisons between Upper and Lower Canada and the Lower Provinces. When we take partners for life we take them for richer or poorer, and endow them with all our worldly goods, and I think we should go on the same principle in carrying out this union with the Lower Provinces. I have been surprised at some of the arguments which I have heard some of the opponents of this scheme bring against it. I was assuredly surprised at the course taken the other day by my honorable friend from Niagara (Hon. Mr. CURRIE), who, in trying to make out a point, spoke of our commercial and agricultural interests here as being very small, and in speaking of our shipping and the amount of tonnage employed in doing the business of Canada, said, "Oh! that only exists on paper."

HON. MR. CURRIE—I beg my honorable friend's pardon. In any remarks I made I certainly did not say that either the commercial or agricultural interests of Canada were small. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. FERRIER—When my honorable friend makes this statement, I have nothing further to say about it. I supposed I was correct in the impression I gathered from his remarks, but I must have misunderstood him. But I must say this, that I thought he was exceedingly unkind when he took up newspapers and read from them a catalogue of the supposed political sins of his own friends, the party he formerly acted with. As these honorable gentlemen are now devoting themselves to what I regard as being for the best interests of the country by carrying out this scheme of union, I think really my honorable friend would do better to support them.