

tempt every such foul, unfounded imputation against their loyalty. And I would advise the hon. member for Shefford to keep equally cool under similar provocation. If he and his friends are really loyal—and I have no doubt they are—all such aspersions of their loyalty, instead of affecting them, will only recoil on the heads of their accusers.

MR. T. R. FERGUSON said—Feeling and knowing as I do, Mr. SPEAKER, the great desire that is felt by the honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches, and also, I am ready to admit, by the large majority of the honorable members of this House, that discussion should not be continued unnecessarily, and that no obstructions should be thrown in the way of an immediate decision on the question before us, I beg to state that it is not from choice but from necessity, that it is not from any desire of self-gratification, but from a deep sense of duty, that I rise to say a single word upon this occasion, particularly as so much has been said, and as the night is now so far advanced. I hope, therefore, that as I have remained silent during the debate up to the present moment, the House will hear with me while I briefly express my views on this all-important matter, and assign a few of the reasons that induce me to record my vote in the manner which I design. Sir, I would say that I stand here in a different position from that of many honorable members who submitted the resolutions embodying the Confederation scheme to their constituents, and who held public meetings on the subject, and who received from them positive instructions as to how their vote should be recorded. I received a circular from the Government, marked "Private," but took no action to ascertain public opinion on its contents, so that I am, I regret to say, without a single word of advice as to how I should act in the matter. I may say, sir, that after reading the resolutions over again and again, I found many things in them that I could not endorse. I felt that they were not that which we had expected from the Government, when we gave our assent to the Coalition that was formed for the purpose of bringing down some proposition for the settlement of our sectional difficulties. I had expected that if a union of the colonies took place at all, and a change of our Constitution in that direction was proposed, we would not have had a Federal but a Legislative form of Government. It has been stated, since we had the pleasure of meeting together in the present session, that the honorable gentlemen who went to the

Conference to represent Canadian views, and engage in preparing a scheme of union, could not obtain that union without its being based upon the Federal system. Sir, I feel that this is very much to be deplored, as I believe that with a union based on the Federal system, we shall have constant dissension, and before very many years, if this scheme goes into operation, we shall again have agitations for constitutional changes of various kinds, and that the ultimate result must be a perfect union under one Legislative Government for the whole country, and that now was the best time to settle the matter finally. If in the end, however, that should be the result of the long discussion we have had upon this Constitution, then I shall feel that though no amendments have been allowed on the floor of this House, yet the discussion has been productive of some good purpose. (Hear, hear.) I had resolved upon offering amendments upon various points in the scheme before us, but the motion for the "previous question" has shut them out, which I very much regret. It is too late now to enter into an explanation of these several amendments I was about to move, or to state what I contemplated accomplishing by proposing them. It is sufficient for me to say that the previous question having been proposed, I feel that there has not been that opportunity for the full consideration of the scheme in all its parts that was expected, or that ought to have been given to this House, in view of the fact that the people are not to be consulted in any other manner than by a vote of their representatives. (Hear, hear.) Being one of those, sir, who earnestly sought for a constitutional change, and who joined in the very just complaint of Upper Canada that she was compelled to labor under great grievances—the lack of equal rights with Lower Canada on this floor, man for man, while she also contributed much the larger proportion of the revenue—it is needless for me to say that I earnestly desired some change, that I sympathized with the prevailing sentiment of Upper Canada, and used my best endeavors, in the House and out of it, to assist in bringing about a remedy for our political and sectional ills. But, sir, we found we could not get representation according to population; and since the present scheme was announced, and knowing the strong feeling which exists against it on the part of many of the Lower Canada members, I endeavored to ascertain, on coming down here, the opinion of hon. gentlemen