

that power by a body elected for very different purposes—elected to carry on the business of the country under the existing constitution. We are told by high authority that Parliament can do anything but make a man a woman, and while we may admit that it might be right on the part of the Imperial Parliament to override the constitution of a Colony were a great State necessity to arise, we have no right under the limited powers which we possess to transfer to a body of men assembled on the other side of the water our legislative functions. This fact must be borne in mind; that this measure is not the result of the action of the Parliament of the country; the Quebec scheme and the bill before the Imperial Parliament have never been before us, and I deny the right of any body of delegates, however appointed, to make laws for us. We are told that there never was such an attempt to violate the principles of Responsible Government as was manifested by the minority in this house endeavoring to counteract the action of last winter by which the delegates were clothed with power to prepare a scheme. My idea of Responsible Government is that the Administration shall be carried on according to the well understood wishes of the people, and I hold that the gentlemen who crossed the sea as delegates know that the people were opposed to any such change as they proposed to make; that they were arbitrarily seeking to change the Constitution contrary to the well known sentiments of the people. The Prov. Secretary calls upon us to show him an example in the history of the world where a statesman was idiotic enough to dissolve the house when he had a majority at his back. We do not ask a dissolution. Let the duration of the house run down, and the question come before the people in its natural course. But was not Mr. Tilley, who had such a majority, "idiotic" enough to dissolve the house in New Brunswick? We all know that he did, and the consequence was that he and his Government were defeated at the polls. His was the manly course, for which he fairly earned the respect of the people of that Province. This may not be a very inviting precedent, but that is the answer I give to the honorable gentleman. If there can be any doubt about the force of this precedent, I will give another: It was asked in the Canadian Parliament whether Confederation should not be placed before the country, and Mr. Brown, the President of the Council, said that if there could be any doubt about the feelings of the people, then, decidedly, the question should be referred to them.

One reason why this Union is to be forced upon us may be gathered from a conversation between two Canadian gentlemen who were present on the opening of the present Session. When that part of the Lieutenant Governor's Speech was read which referred to the large increase of our revenue, one remarked to the other "Good for us." It is "good for us," says Canada, to get these Maritime Provinces, with their surplus revenues, with unlimited power to tax them as we wish. The Provincial Secretary

asked why the petitions of the people against Confederation had not been forwarded through the Lieutenant Governor. I will tell him. In the first place, these petitions were addressed to the House of Commons. The Provincial Secretary made a complaint of their not being sent through him, but I was not aware before that it was customary to send such petitions through the Secretary of the Colony. Petitions to the Queen are in a different position; but the hon. gentleman is incorrect in intimating that he never saw the petitions, for one of them was forwarded to the Lieutenant Governor, and there were other proceedings that passed through his office to which he has not referred. There were petitions and addresses from eight counties. There were addresses asking the members from six counties to resign their seats, because they voted for Confederation; and let me say that if such proceedings had taken place in England—proceedings affecting the entire majority in the House of Commons, no ministry dare attempt to resist such an appeal. The hon. gentleman spoke about the subject being familiar with prominent men in England; let me ask how many members of the houses of Lords and Commons read "The case of the Maritime Provinces," as put before them by the People's Delegates? I use the term "People's Delegates" because we did represent the people; for though a tyrannical majority may rob us of our constitution, yet there is an overwhelming majority behind us who denounce the arbitrary manner in which the measure was pressed.

What were the facts in connection with the Confederation Bill? A more indecent proceeding never took place, even in this house than was witnessed in the House of Lords on the third reading of that bill. When delay was urged by one peer, although the house had been comparatively full at the commencement of his speech, there were but nine members on the benches when he ceased speaking. That is an illustration of the wicked indifference to the wishes and interests of the people of this Province which has prevailed throughout. My hon. and learned friend from Guysboro' very justly said, this afternoon, that more interest would have been excited by a bill imposing a tax on dogs than by a measure involving the future welfare of these British North American Colonies. I was in England for some time, and therefore have had a pretty good opportunity of gauging the public mind, and I know that the recent yacht race across the Atlantic, at which everybody laughed on this side of the water, excited the greatest attention in England, and produced articles in the press which were nauseating to read, while the ablest writers of the day were unable to interest the public in a measure affecting the interests and welfare of these loyal Provinces, and involving perhaps their separation from the mother country. What took place in the House of Commons? The bill was sent down one day, and for the first time in the history of that house, it was read a second time on the following day. Before the papers illus-