

ner to that in which we are sent here to legislate for the country at large. The only difference is the difference between a small legislative body and a large one. They are just as much representatives of the people as we are. When we provide that they shall submit by-laws to a direct vote of the people, can it be said that it is a violation of the Constitution, or even an unjust or improper course to take a vote in a similar way, when so much larger matters are at stake? I do say, sir, that if there were no example for it—if our Legislature had not shown that it was the people's right to have a voice on all matters affecting them largely—we should now proceed to make that precedent. (Hear, hear.) I do not mean to say, however, in speaking thus, that I am adverse in the slightest degree to there being a dissolution of the House; but it strikes me that we will have a great many side-issues in a contest of that kind, and cannot, therefore, arrive at the direct sense of the people so closely as we should be able to do by a square vote of yea or nay. Nevertheless, it is of very great importance that before advancing to the end of the proceedings that we have contemplated by passing these resolutions, they should first be submitted to the country in some way. I am in favor of the resolutions going to the people in any way rather than the scheme should be carried out without such expression; and I am also desirous that the public should be awakened from that apathy which has been alluded to by the hon. member for Peel, and which I am also satisfied exists among the people upon this question. The honorable member for Peel has asserted that there could not be half a dozen gentlemen found on the floor of this House who would say that this country could go on and prosper—but I say it could prosper for the next decade as it has prospered during the past, without any change whatever. I believe I am one of those, few though they may be, who so think; but I am also one of those who thought that it would be very desirable to have a change in the representation of the different sections of the province, on the floor of this House. I thought that Upper Canada contributed so much more towards the revenue of this country than Lower Canada, that she ought to have a larger voice in the disposal of that revenue. Therefore a change of the Constitution, in this respect, has been agitated by men entertaining that opinion, but I never did

feel that the people of Lower Canada considered themselves on the eve of a revolution, or that the people of Upper Canada had arrived at that point, that they felt it absolutely necessary to resort to revolutionary measures to obtain justice. While I feel that we have now arrived at that stage that we can have a union with the Lower Provinces that would give us a strength and a stability that we cannot acquire by the resolutions we have just passed, yet I do not desire that any change should take place without the people of this country having the fullest and freest opportunity of expressing themselves upon its desirability. I desire that the people should have this scheme presented to them, side by side with the proposal for a legislative union, that we may ascertain whether or not they would adopt a Federal union, in preference to a Legislative union. I have been charged with having advanced arguments in discussing the resolutions, which were as applicable and favorable to a Federal as to a Legislative union, and that I said nothing more favorable to the one than to the other. Well I admit that if you take three or four isolated points of a man's argument, you can make them support exactly the opposite of that which his whole course of argument was calculated to uphold, and when you put all of my remarks together, you will find that they bear strongly in favor of the legislative form of union. This much will be found, that every argument which I advanced that could be said to favor Federation, was also an argument in favor of a Legislative union; and, in addition, I brought prominently to view the greater economy connected with the working of the latter. I consider that argument a strong one, in view of the circumstances at present existing in this country—the suffering in consequence of the failure of crops, and the depression of trade owing to the war in the United States, the position of this country is such that it is not able to bear additional heavy burdens; and if we are going to make a change in our Constitution, that change should be of a character that would lessen those burdens instead of increasing them, if possible. And if we must incur a heavy burden for defensive purposes, let us have as much saving, in other respects, as we can effect, so that there will be as little expenditure as may be for the mere machinery of government, and then we shall have a