

being discussed there, they now coolly ask us to give them authority to proceed to Downing-street to report the utter failure of their own grand scheme, which, as I remarked in a former debate, they yet hope to manufacture into a live constitution for these distracted provinces, through Downing-street influence. (Hear, hear.) It is well known that our financial condition is truly alarming, and instead of proceeding with the legislation of the several measures now before the House, and submitting, according to custom, the Budget, so that the real condition of our affairs may be fully exhibited to the people, the gentlemen on the Treasury benches have suddenly come to the conclusion, not only to withhold this important information, but, forsooth, we are asked to pass a vote of credit to be accounted for at the next session. A prorogation is shortly to follow, and the country will be left in a state of uncertainty as to its future, until it shall please these gentlemen to return from their mission. When we consider the effect which the blandishments of the Treasury benches but too frequently produce upon members sent to this House to carry out certain avowed principles and measures; when we see the class to which I allude violating the promises made to their constituents and going over "body and bones" to a Government they were elected specially to oppose, we need not be astonished shortly to learn that influences and blandishments in higher quarters will have the like effect on the gentlemen opposite when abroad, who will ever be ready to find a plausible excuse for any gross betrayal of the trusts reposed in them by pliant and subservient followers. The avowed object for the immediate prorogation of the session is the imminent danger which threatens this province, and yet we are kept in the dark as to the real cause for alarm. We are told, however, that a large outlay, but the amount is not stated, is to be devoted to fortifying certain portions of Canada by the Home Government; and that we are to be asked to contribute an unknown sum of money towards the same object. But when we ask for more definite information, we are met by the assurance that it would not be for the public interest to afford further information just now. We are told to wait patiently and to be content with the fact that certain gentlemen on the Treasury benches are to proceed to England with the view of arranging the amount to be appropriated by Canada for its defence, and towards the maintenance of a more effective militia or-

ganization then we have heretofore been called upon to make. I maintain, sir, that the understanding in respect to such contributions could be as well arrived at by means of dispatches and correspondence between this Government and the Colonial Office. (Hear, hear.) I protest against the transference of the negotiations on these matters to Downing-street, before we obtain some more satisfactory replies to the questions we have addressed to the gentlemen on the Treasury benches. The representatives of a people overburdened with heavy taxes, have a right to insist on knowing the limit beyond which the gentlemen on the Treasury benches should not consent to make this province liable. We know that it is a difficult matter to obtain money in England at present, and we are not even informed of the terms on which the Finance Minister is now borrowing. We have had no information upon this question. We are kept in ignorance of the position in which we are to be placed. Now, I think that the policy of the people of this country should be to vote what they think they can bear, and no more. There is no member of this House, there is no man in this country, I believe, who is unwilling to give his quota of taxes for the work of defence; but there must be a limit to everything. (Hear, hear.) The principle laid down by three of the honorable gentlemen on the Treasury Benches whom I now see on the other side of the House, when with myself they were members of a former administration, is as sound now as it was then; and if the force of the American army two years ago was not such as to induce us to recommend, by way of guarding against danger from that quarter, large outlays for defence, I do not see why my old colleagues should now consent to entertain a proposal involving an enormous sum of money at the present time. Now, I shall read extracts from a Minute of Council, dated 28th October 1862, in reply to the Duke of NEWCASTLE's suggestion that we should raise fifty thousand volunteers:—

The proposal of His Grace to organize and drill not less than 50,000 men is not now for the first time presented to the province. The measure prepared by the late Government and rejected by the Legislature, contemplated the formation of a force to that extent, and Your Excellency's advisers cannot disguise their opinion that the province is averse to the maintenance of a force which would seriously derange industry and tax its resources to a degree justifiable only in periods of imminent danger or actual war. The people