

Council were not elected on political grounds, but to administer the affairs of the municipality. Any expression of opinion that they may offer on political subjects is therefore but the expression of their own individual opinions, and however much it may be entitled to respect from the character of the gentlemen composing the council, it can in no way be regarded as the expression of their constituents' wishes on the subject. But I contend, moreover, that the vote in the council was not even an expression of opinion on the part of the members; for we find from the report that several members opposed the motion for an appeal to the people, simply on the ground that the question was one that ought not to have been brought before them, it being of a purely political character, and they rejected it without expressing any opinion upon its real merits. Then, combined with them were the gentlemen who really oppose the appeal to the people, and of these two classes was the majority composed, of which the honorable gentlemen spoke so exultingly. (Hear, hear.) But apart from the expression of opinion of the Counties Council referred to, in whatever light it may be regarded, I object to the resolutions being submitted to Parliament and pressed upon the consideration of this House in the same way as the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. They are said to be passed or rejected as a whole, without alteration or amendment, just as if the Government were bound to stand or fall by the decision. The Government, it appears, has pledged itself to the other governments to abide by these resolutions, and in that case it should have been a condition that they should stand or fall with them. Ministers are opposed further to any expression of opinion on the contents of these resolutions, other than what may be stated in the speeches of honorable members; the resolutions cannot be changed, modified or amended in any particular, and yet the chambers are asked to consider them! What is the use of considering them if we cannot come to our own conclusions and give them effect in the shape of amendments? I stand here as the representative of, if not one of the largest, at least one of the most intelligent constituencies in Upper Canada, and I have no hesitation in saying the people are generally in favor of the principles of the resolutions; in other words, of a Confederation of Canada and the Lower Provinces, but I do not believe they are in favor of all the details of the project. The Honorable Premier, in moving the resolutions, said

they would be productive of two special advantages to Canada;—they would give us strength and durability, and at the same time settle the difficulties under which the province has labored for some years. That honorable member also stated that if this union is not accomplished there will be a danger of our being forced by violence into the United States; that, if not forced therein by violence, we will insensibly slide thither; and that we are upon an inclined plane which must of necessity land us there, and whether by violence or by sliding, we must reach that result. (Hear, hear.) If the Honorable Premier had shown that the proposed union would in reality give us strength, and place us in a position to improve our defences, then I would admit he had made a good case. I have anxiously waited to hear his reasons and explanations, for I wanted better reasons for adopting the resolutions than any I was acquainted with. I am anxious to have them carefully analyzed and scrutinized, and desire that they may be found in the interest of Canada. If the Government, in bringing them down, had stated that after a thorough canvass and examination, if deemed desirable, they might be amended in some particulars, I would have accepted the declaration with satisfaction and hope; but no, though allowed to debate them, we cannot proceed any further. They are submitted, as I have already said, like an opening Speech from the Throne, an amendment to which is treated as a motion of want of confidence, and I can see no great use in discussing them at all. I desire, however, prior to the taking of the vote, to know how much the Intercolonial Railway will cost. Only a short time ago public opinion in Upper Canada was adverse to this enterprise, but if new light has dawned upon the subject, I would be glad to share in it. I would like to know also what the route will be, and how many millions it will cost; and if it should be shown that its construction will be a real advantage to the country, I will be prepared to go for it. There are other points upon which I desire information, and one is as to the proportion of the debt which Upper and Lower Canada will be called upon respectively to bear. If the sixty-two and a-half millions of debt the Confederation is to assume is to be divided according to the extent of the two populations, will Lower Canada, over and above its share, assume the amount paid for the abolition of the Seigniorial Tenure? These questions, in my opinion, need answers before this scheme is carried.