

The MACDONALD-TACHÉ Ministry, who represented the Conservative party in the country, had just been defeated in the Legislative Assembly; they were obliged to resign. It will be recollected that the Government were beaten on a question of mal-administration of the public business. I allude to the advance of \$100,000 made to the Grand Trunk Railway without authority of Parliament, for which act several members of the Cabinet were responsible. Could you inform me, Mr. SPEAKER, what has become of the \$100,000 question? Alas! it disappeared in the Ministerial crisis, and left us the extraordinary Coalition which now governs us, composed of men who for ten years treated each other as men devoid of political principle! (Hear, hear.) The Conservative party clung so tenaciously to power, that they were not appalled by the position to which they had brought the country. Any union or coalition between two political parties, of opposite principles, proves an abandonment of principle by one or the other. All coalitions are vicious in their very foundation: they have always been held as proofs of political profligacy, in England as everywhere else; and they are the more dangerous that they are generally strong. To the present Coalition we are indebted for the scheme of the Confederation of the British Provinces in a tangible form. Had that Coalition never been formed, we should never have heard of the Quebec Conference, nor of the resolutions adopted at that meeting in October last, and now submitted to our consideration. Now, who authorized the holding of that Conference? What right had that body to arrogate to itself the power of proposing a radical change in our political condition? How was Canada represented there? Three-fourths of the Canadian delegates were men under the ban of parliamentary condemnation. How was the voting carried on at that Convention? Was it not by provinces? Have not the four little provinces below had twice as many votes on each question as the two large provinces of Canada? These questions all occur naturally. If to each of them a categorical answer were rendered, we should be able to throw some light on the way in which the interests of the country have been neglected, overridden, and sacrificed. If we only think that to the last question no other answer could be rendered than an affirmative, there is no room for wonder that the Lower Provinces had all the advantage in the arrangements concluded at the Conference. Notwithstanding that the compromise was in

their favor, the great number of the provinces concerned now repudiate its provisions, according to information which reaches us every day. They seem to be afraid of us; and notwithstanding the offers of money made to them, they will have nothing to do with a union. Our reputation for extravagance must be very bad to frighten them to that degree; and, no doubt, when they saw us spend in the course of a month or two, for receptions, in traveling and in feasting, sums equalling in amount the whole of revenue of Prince Edward Island, they must have gone back with a sorry idea of our way of managing public business. (Hear, hear.) I do not mean to repeat what has been said during the debate; but before proceeding, I may be allowed to draw a contrast between our manner of acting and that of our neighbors in the United States when constitutional changes are in question. In the United States—that country which people take so much pains to represent as the hotbed of all political, social, moral and physical horrors—they do not play with the written constitutions of the several states, any more than with that of the American union. There, whenever a constitution is to be amended, generally, it requires a vote of two-thirds of each of the two Houses. If it is the Constitution of the United States which is to be amended, the measure must also be sanctioned by a majority in each of the legislatures of the several states. If the amendment relates to a local constitution, besides a two-thirds vote of the two Houses, the amendment must be ratified by a convention of delegates from the different parties in the state, selected specially for the occasion. The United States are now occupied with the consideration of an amendment of their Constitution, the object of which is the abolition of slavery. The amendment has been adopted by the Congress and by the Senate of the American union, and must be ratified by a majority of the local legislatures, before it forms a part of the Constitution. It will even be necessary to take into the account the states which are now in rebellion. We see at once the guarantees they are provided with, that no radical change shall be adopted without the consent of the people, who are allowed sufficient time to weigh all the considerations which may operate in favor of any projected change. This is the method of proceeding among our sagacious neighbors in matters of importance; and, as a thing of course, they have established a political status which leaves far behind it all that human