

confusion and uncertainty of a general election, and until a new Parliament has been summoned and given its sanction to the measure. And the most curious part of it is, the honorable gentleman does not want the appeal now—he will take it by and by.

HON. J. H. CAMERON—My argument was entirely the contrary. I said there should not be a day's delay in appealing to the country; that as the Government had told us they were to meet Parliament in July, there would be no reason to prevent this Parliament being dissolved, and a new Parliament being summoned by that time.

HON. MR. BROWN—Yes; but the honorable gentleman most inconsistently told us in the same breath that the deputation of Ministers must go at once to England. Does he fancy a general election would be brought on during the absence from the country of the leading members of the Administration? If he does, I tell him he is mistaken. But does the honorable gentleman pretend there is any doubt as to the feeling of the people of Canada on this measure? Not at all. On the contrary, he is quite confident that if submitted to the people there would be a vast majority in its favor—a complete sweep over the country. Nay, strange enough, he gives this very fact of the certainty of approval as the chief argument in favor of an election. He says, "Send it to the people; there is no fear of the result. The very men who now sit here to-day, or others who think as they do, will come back and adopt it!" Could anything more absurd than this be imagined? Is not the argument clearly in the opposite direction? Should not the honorable gentleman have said—"The people approve of this measure; their representatives approve of it; if you had an election, the same men would be sent back, or others like them; a vast sum would be uselessly expended; much valuable time would be lost; partisan broils might be revived; don't, then, lose a moment, but put it through at once." (Cheers.) But I confess the honorable gentleman did suggest one argument in favor of an appeal to the people, and a very strange one it certainly was coming from such a quarter. The hon. member for Peel says he has not a doubt as to the feelings of the people of Upper Canada; he is quite certain that an almost unanimous verdict would be rendered by them in favor of this measure. But he says he has some doubts as to what the people of Lower Canada might think about it; they might possibly like to give the measure a death-blow,

and he is in favor of giving them a chance to do it! Now, sir, I did think that a very peculiar style of argument from one so enamoured of this measure, and from one, too, who has been supposed not to be very closely allied with the majority of Lower Canadians on matters of public policy, and especially on this particular question. (Hear, hear.) Who could have expected to find the hon. member for Peel assuming the rôle of an exponent of popular feeling in Lower Canada, and constituting himself the guardian of the rights of the French-Canadians? (Hear, hear.) It did strike me that the honorable gentleman might very properly have left the Lower Canadians to speak for themselves. (Hear, hear.) In view of the vote recorded on this measure at our last sitting—considering the fact that a majority of twelve on the Lower Canada vote was then recorded in favor of the measure, I do think the hon. member for Peel might have been well content to accept the votes of Lower Canadian representatives as the best index to Lower Canadian feeling. (Hear, hear.) There were three Lower Canada members absent, on Saturday morning, from the division; but had they been here, there would have been a majority of thirteen on the Lower Canada vote in favor of the measure.

HON. MR. DORION—No; Messrs. DUNKIN, ABBOTT and DAoust would have voted against it.

HON. MR. BROWN—I believe Mr. DAoust and the Hon. Mr. ABBOTT have declared in favor of Confederation. Mr. DUNKIN would probably have voted against it. As for the honorable member for Argenteuil (Hon. Mr. ABBOTT), I see he is now in his place, and can answer for himself. With Mr. DUNKIN voting against the measure, there would have been a Lower Canada majority of thirteen in its favor. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. HOLTON—The hon. member for Argenteuil would have voted against it.

Cries of "Ask himself!" and laughter.

HON. MR. BROWN—The honorable gentleman is of age, and can speak for himself. I could not pay him such a poor compliment as to fancy for a moment that he could vote against this measure. I have no doubt he would have voted on the right side. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. HOLTON—I am sure he would, but not with you. (Laughter.)

HON. MR. BROWN—Ah! I repeat that in the face of that Lower Canada majority of thirteen, and a French-Canadian majority of