

ada hold its name sacred in regard to people who are unable to defend themselves. As the question was put—I forget by whom—when the senator from Prince Edward Island was speaking to the House, in order to preserve the provisions of this contract what are you going to do? That strikes me as an absolute decapitation of the island. Why? Appeal to the people of Canada over the heads of its representatives, if they are not fit to deal with a question of that kind on a basis of honesty, fair play and justice, according to contract. The Island is not asking for the pound of flesh. The Island tells Canada that if its population increases it wants six members, as granted under the Confederation Act, and if the population diminishes it is not up to the bigger dog to chop up the little dog and eat him alive. The hon. member from Charlottetown did not say it in those words, but I will express it in that way. It practically means that when the population of Canada becomes 40 or 50 or 75 millions, that Island will not have a single representative, but will be chewed up by the bigger dog. Is the Parliament of Canada going to stand for such doctrine in regard to national agreements, and national contracts? I know that what we say here to-night will have no immediate effect, but I hold that if the senators would have the courage of their convictions, and put them down in black and white, in years to come they would bear fruit, and the electors of the future would understand that the appeal of the downtrodden Island should be heard and met in all fairness and justice.

Hon. Mr. MURPHY—Hon. gentlemen will remember that on two previous occasions last year I spoke somewhat elaborately on this subject, during the debate on the Address, and also on the motion to allow increased representation from the West, to which was attached an application to the House of Commons and House of Lords, England—the Government of England, in other words—to grant an amendment to the British North America Act which would give us four members instead of the three which we are entitled to under the last distribution. This matter of the representation of Prince Edward Island is a sore spot with the people of my province. In fact the people feel that we have been deceived in some way, by whom we know not. There is no question at all that, at our entrance into Confederation, it was understood by the men who represented our province at the time, and it was also understood by the other party to the contract, the representa-

tive of the Canadian Confederation as it then existed, that we were to have an irreducible minimum of six members for all time to come. Our contract of Confederation is verbatim with the contract of British Columbia, which entered into Confederation the year before, and, by analogy, hon. gentlemen will see that it would be absurd that we, who had stayed out of Confederation for six years on account of not being conceded the irreducible minimum of six members, should at that time come in without that concession. British Columbia the year before entered the Confederation with a population of ten thousand white people in a total population of forty thousand, and that province was conceded an irreducible minimum of six members for all time to come. It must appeal to all fair-minded men that Prince Edward Island, with upwards of six times the white population, would hardly be content to come into the pact unless it was conceded at least the same terms as British Columbia. The record, as I put it before hon. gentlemen last year, and the record as it has been well put in that memorandum submitted to the Interprovincial Conference by the Premier of Prince Edward Island on behalf of the province, shows clearly the intention—although by some clerical error the intention was not implemented in the written agreement,—that we should have a minimum of six. By some unfortunate error in the writing of the contract, the word “readjusted” was used instead of the word “increased,” as it appears in the British Columbia contract. For that reason when it came to the census of 1891, readjustment was taken to mean down or up, and on account of our loss of population as compared with Quebec, a readjustment was made that gave us fewer members than before. Now the men of the Upper provinces never thought for a moment, in their optimism as to the success of the nation, that there would be such a thing as a readjustment downward. We had been increasing in as fair a ratio as any other province, but our statesmen saw that, owing to our position, and owing to our want of a chance for industrial development,—our lack of mines and forest,—that the province could not keep pace with the other provinces of the union. Hence they said: Our voice will go to the vanishing point,” and they therefore demanded a fixed representation for all time to come, so as to give us at least some small voice in the affairs of the great Dominion. Now, with individuals, so with