

hungry and thirsting among the people for having this scheme put into immediate operation. I do not mean to say that the scheme has not been talked of among the people, but the hon. member for Peel, who has been extensively abroad among the people, has told us that there is the greatest apathy in the public mind; but, sir, that apathy does not exist among the people alone. I state it fearlessly, sir, before honorable gentlemen, without any fear of contradiction, that the greatest apathy exists in this House itself. I have seen the votes of honorable gentlemen counted in favor of the scheme, whom we all know have no faith in it; but who have been drawn into casting their vote for it by former party leanings. (Hear, hear.) Having come to the conclusion that something must be done, and this being the only thing they had an opportunity of doing, they recorded their votes for it. The faithlessness of the people has been well represented. Mr. SPEAKER, while the great leader of the Reform party finds it necessary to stand up here and throw dust in our eyes, by trying to make it appear that the people, to whose touch he has been so sensitive in times past, need not now be consulted, the Honorable Attorney General took a different course. He was asked for precedents, and told us that when violent constitutional changes had been made in England, the precedents for the course proposed by this motion were founded. He talked to us about the union of Ireland, in connection with which the career of PITT—a career that was distinguished in Britain, but which was of such a character that, though signalized throughout Europe, it yet produced a reaction that caused England to fall back in the race of national progress for many years. The result of his course was such that some of the brightest names on English history left the reform principles to which they had been attached, and connected themselves with the Pitt party, and the same will be the result here of the game now being played by honorable gentlemen opposite. This is the precedent which, in a British constitutional country of the nineteenth century, is brought up and used as a whip held over our backs. Why, sir, we have no French revolutions at this day. But they say we have an American revolution. We are told by Ministers themselves, and by speakers, under their cheers, that we have to choose between this scheme of Confederation and annexation to a neighboring republic, and they talk to us as if there was no time to lose—that one or other will be accomplished

immediately. How do we know but it may happen while our Ministers are gone to England, and that when they return they will find the flag of the United States floating over their country. Sir, there is no more danger of anything of that kind happening now than there was when this Government was formed last spring. When the honorable and gallant knight at the head of the Government was called upon to form an Administration, and brought his Government before the House, he did not then hold up to us the danger of invasion, unless we supported his Government. The Government did not then inform us that if we did not form a Federal union we would be annexed to the United States. All these threats on their part have grown out of accidents that have happened to their policy since last June. But, Mr. SPEAKER, the game that is being played now is one that cannot but provoke a conservative reaction in this country. Do honorable gentlemen believe that it is really for the best interests of this country that so many honorable gentlemen, who entertained reform views, are found voting to do away with the elective principle in the constitution of the Legislative Council—a principle that has been held sacred in the eyes of so vast a number of the people of Upper Canada, that to accomplish it has been the battle-cry of many honorable men in times past, *ab uno disce omnes*? The Honorable Attorney General, as the leader of his party, may look with favor upon the conservative reaction which seems to await us. We can afford to go back to that dark period of English constitutional history, when Toryism, profiting by the unstable politics of France, ruled England for fifty years, created the public debt, and stifled the progress of free opinion. It is from this period that the Hon. Attorney General quotes precedents against an appeal to the people—a dark period, in which the rights of the people were sacrificed to a want of faith in them. Shall we copy such examples? Shall we attempt to hold up the terrors of the American war—the dreaded instability of American institutions—to frighten ourselves into dread of our own people? Shall we copy the reactionary abuses of the times of PITT, to the extent that we refuse to consult the people upon the great revolution proposed here? (Hear, hear.) The people were surprised by the political earthquake which took place here last spring. They were astonished by what took place, but they were told that there was no risk for them; that it was necessary for the defence of the country that these men should come