

was accomplished without a reference to the people, did any one say that these things were unconstitutional? Has my hon. friend not shown that Sir ROBERT PEEL, who was the great protector of the liberties of Parliament, quoted these proceedings with approbation, as showing what the House of Commons could do if it chose. And so the honorable member for Montmerency quoted the language of WILLIAM PITT, who, although his name in late days was connected with some things which did not meet the approbation of his party, was the leader of the Conservative party, and carried through to his deathbed the principles of his father the Earl of CHATHAM. He was supported by his party and by all the leading whigs when he made his speech on the Irish union, in which he alleged that the Irish Parliament had full power to vote away those rights which it was elected to preserve. His language was quoted by the honorable member, and did time permit, I would read it again to the House, for it is the language of wisdom and truth. My honorable friend from Peel says—"Oh, that is all very well, but this is quite a different thing from the Irish union, because we have only a limited Constitution under our Constitutional Act." That is quite true, but Ireland as well as this country had only a limited Constitution, under which not even a measure of supply could be laid before the Irish Parliament unless it had previously been sent to the English Government, approved, and then sent back for the approval and sanction of the Irish Parliament; and it was not till 1782 that this was changed, and the reference to England of such measures done away with. My honorable friend refers us to the language of the Constitutional Act to show how limited our Constitution is; but by that act we are empowered, in the widest language that could be employed, to make laws for the peace, welfare and good government of the people of Canada. There could be no larger powers conferred upon us, and although it is quite true that our political existence is only statutory, that constitutionally our judges have no right to commit for contempt, and that we have no prescriptive rights such as those which the Imperial Parliament possesses, yet this is equally true—that we stand, with regard to the people of Canada, precisely in the same position as the House of Commons in England stands with regard to the people of England. (Hear, hear.) And no man who values representative government would consent to sit here under

a less extensive commission—no man will get up and disclaim the possession of such powers. But my honorable friend says we can only pass resolutions, and cannot change our Constitution except by addressing the Sovereign, praying Her to give them effect through the Imperial Parliament; and he argues from this that we ought to go to the people and have a new Parliament to do it. A new Parliament can, however, do nothing more than we can do. Sir, I believe in my conscience, that this House, more than any House since 1841, represents truly and faithfully the people of Canada. If the members of this House do not represent the country—all its interests, classes, and communities—it never has been represented. (Hear, hear.) I believe that all classes and interests are represented here; but if the House votes for this motion, it declares that it does not represent them. (Hear, hear.) If we represent the people of Canada, then, in the words of the Constitutional Act, we are here to pass laws for the peace, welfare and good government of the country. But if we do not represent the people of Canada—if we declare so by passing this resolution—then what great criminals have we been in the past? If we do not represent them, if we have no right to represent them, then we have no power to pass one single bill and declare it to be law, even although it be a bill to establish a saw-mill. If we do not represent the people of Canada, we have no right to be here. But if we do represent them, we have a right to see for them, to think for them, to act for them; we have a right to go to the foot of the Throne and declare that we believe it to be for the peace, welfare and good government of the people of Canada to form of these provinces one empire, presenting an unbroken and undaunted front to every foe; and if we do not think we have this right, we are unworthy of the commission we have received from the people of Canada. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

MR. M. C. CAMERON—I would ask the Hon. Atty. Gen. West, did he support Mr. DUNKIN'S Temperance Bill?

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD—I don't remember. I don't generally go for temperance bills. (Laughter.)

MR. M. C. CAMERON—If the honorable gentleman did support that bill, he supported what, according to the rule he has laid down, is a violation of the Constitution.