

permit the Maritime Provinces and the North-West Territory to be incorporated into the same system of Government."

HON. MR. CAMPBELL.—The resolutions on the table fulfilled that promise.

HON. MR. CURRIE.—Well, the honorable member's colleague, the Provincial Secretary, did not mention the Lower Provinces otherwise than incidentally at the great meeting in South Oxford, and the Intercolonial Railway not at all. If his position (Hon. Mr. Currie's) was correct, that the Confederation of Canada alone was the basis of the coalition, then they had not carried out their pledge, and he pronounced the scheme now propounded as the authorized production of a number of self-appointed delegates, and not the measure the country expected. Then he had been surprised to find that in the Conference Canada had so small a representation. He very willingly admitted that we had very able men there, but they were few compared with the whole number of the Conference, and did not fairly represent the population and wealth of the country. The Honorable Commissioner of Crown Lands had said, to be sure, that it did not make much difference as the votes were not taken by numbers but by the provinces, in other words, that Prince Edward Island, with its population of 80,000 souls, had as much to say as Canada with its millions.

HON. MR. CAMPBELL.—The two sections of Canada voted separately.

HON. MR. CURRIE.—That was not much better, for it made Prince Edward Island equal to Upper Canada, with nearly 1,500,000 of population. But all this apart, he maintained the country was not prepared to pass judgment upon this momentous question. It was the greatest matter that had ever been presented for its consideration, and it should be the aim of all to have it perfectly understood and approved of before it was adopted. We should seek to frame a Constitution which would last for ages. If any portion of the country were seriously opposed to the project, and it were carried through in spite of them, a wrong would be inflicted which would perpetuate itself in all coming time. If passed against the sense of a majority of Upper or Lower Canada, the act might lead to an agitation such as had never been witnessed, and which might be fraught with the most disastrous consequences. To prove that the country was not prepared for this sudden change, he would ask how many public meetings had been held in Upper Canada for the purpose of discussing it? He had heard of but one, and

that not very influential, where both sides of the question were discussed. The people had in fact been waiting for the programme, and to this moment it had not been supplied—certainly not in all its details. In a matter of this momentous importance, upon which the well-being of millions in the future might so much depend, he sincerely trusted the country would not be hurried, but that full time for discussion would be given to enable it to arrive at a safe verdict. (Hear.) It was said that all the Governments interested were in favor of the project, and it was well known that there was to be a dissolution of Parliament in one of the provinces; if so, where was the necessity for haste in Canada, unless indeed it was for the purpose of unduly influencing the other provinces? When the union between Upper and Lower Canada was effected, there had been no such impatience of delay. The Imperial Government had brought in a bill, copies of which were sent out, and submitted to the Parliament of Upper Canada—Lower Canada then had no Parliament to consult, and in its case there was less need of delay than now—the bill was sent home again approved, though meetings were held in Lower Canada strongly opposed to the measure, and to this day it is said it was forced upon an unwilling people. (Hear, hear, from some of the French members.) If time was then allowed, why should not time be allowed now, when a much more important union was in question? (Hear, hear.) Had the views of such eminent men as Lord Ellenborough and Lord Durham been duly appreciated in 1839, this Parliament would not now be met for the purpose of dissolving a union which had been unprofitable to one section, and unsatisfactory to the other. (Hear, hear, derisively.) He would now take the liberty to quote the views of Lord Durham, to which he had just alluded. They were as follows:

I am averse to every plan that has been proposed for giving an equal number of members to the two Provinces, in order to obtain the temporary end of out-numbering the French, because I think the same object will be obtained without any violation of the principles of representation, and without any such appearance of injustice in the scheme, as would set public opinion both in England and America strongly against it; and because, when emigration shall have increased the English population in the Upper Province, the adoption of such a principle would operate to defeat this very purpose it is intended to serve. It appears to me that any such elective arrangement founded on the present Provincial Divisions