

Canada and another for Upper Canada; you had a Solicitor General for Lower Canada and another for Upper Canada—a double set of officers, each responsible to its own Province. You adopted the theory, and you carried resolutions through the Legislature adopting the principle, of double majority, but the differences did not end there. You have but to look at the great volumes of the Consolidated Statutes of old Canada to see that you had one volume of consolidated laws operating over the entire Province equally, another large volume operating only in the Province of Lower Canada, and another equally large operating exclusively in the Province of Upper Canada. This shows that the experience from 1841 to 1866 proved conclusively that you could not establish in ordinary legislation the principle of uniformity. How, then, are you going to adopt and work satisfactorily the principle of uniformity for general elections? There is only one ground of uniformity that can be taken, and that is manhood suffrage. The moment you go away from that you undertake to base the qualifications on something which is not under the control of this Government. Real property you do not control—how much shall be held, in whom it shall be invested, what shall be the interest of tenant and what the interest of occupant—all these questions upon which you base the right of the franchise is not under your control, but in the control of another Government. Why, Sir, it is preposterous to establish a franchise of our own, independently of the Provinces, and to undertake to base that franchise on property which is wholly under the control of the Provinces. If we want to deal logically and consistently with this question, there is but one basis, and that is manhood suffrage. The hon. gentleman has one class of voters whose property he does control, that is the Indians. He will not allow them to hold their property, he says they are incapable of managing or controlling it; and yet he proposes to enfranchise this class whose property he controls and he will not allow them to hold the property by which they are to be qualified. Sir, this principle of uniformity, for which the hon. gentleman contends, and which he makes the pretext for proposing a measure in the interest of his party, is one that has led to arbitrary government wherever it has been adopted. The principle of uniformity is a principle that is inconsistent with free institutions. We have only to look at France after the revolution of 1798. What was the ideal that all her statesmen had in view, whether they belonged to the Girondists or to the more radical republicans? They were all worshippers of uniformity, all advocates of symmetry; and what was the result there? The result was that the revolution, like Saturn, devoured its own children. They carried but that principle until they separated the Church from the State and eliminated religion from the universe. Those attempts at symmetry led to arbitrary government, and to the overturning of those principles with which the advocates of the revolution themselves started out. What the hon. gentleman proposes here, is not to advance Parliamentary Government, but to restrain it. He proposes not to increase the liberties of the people—not to increase the free action of the people in political matters—but a measure for the purpose of controlling their action. I listened to the Conservative views expressed by the hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Gigault) and the hon. member for Bagot (Mr. Dupont). I do not agree with them as to the extent to which the franchise might be safely entrusted to the people of this country; but, Sir, I admire their consistency, and the enlightened sentiments which they expressed. Those hon. gentlemen are ardent lovers of liberty. If they oppose the extension of the franchise in their own Province, if they were afraid to extend that franchise to the extent of manhood suffrage, it was because they were more anxious to subserve substantial freedom than they were to adopt an ideal of

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absolute perfectibility and absolute uniformity. Sir, I have no doubt that the great majority of the representatives from the Province of Quebec in this House entertain the same views, and it is greatly to be regretted that these hon. gentlemen have not the courage of their convictions. It is greatly to be regretted that those gentlemen who hold to the federal principle and are anxious for its maintenance—xious for the rights of the Provinces and for the continuance of the control the people have over the representation of this country—do not act in accordance with their convictions and cordially support the propositions of hon. gentlemen on this side of the House. So far as I have been able to gather, during the past two years in this House, the great majority of those who support the hon. Minister of Public Works and the hon. Secretary of State agree with us in our views of the constitution and in our policy with regard to it, and sympathise with us on those questions of constitutional law which have arisen between the hon. First Minister and the Opposition in this House. Holding those views, and entertaining those sympathies which they do with us, it is a misfortune for this country that these hon. gentlemen do not act with us and support us. I cannot but regard every other question as a question of minor importance—as a question of indifference—compared with the important constitutional questions which the hon. First Minister has put in issue during the past few years. The hon. First Minister has made war upon the Government of the Provinces; he has sought to destroy their influence and their autonomy; he has sought to put an end to Parliamentary Government in the Provinces; he has done this deliberately; he has declared over and over again that he is in favor of legislative union, and opposed to the principle on which our constitution is based. Does the hon. gentleman deny that?

Mr. CHAIRMAN. I think the hon. gentleman is out of order in discussing that question on this amendment.

Mr. MILLS. I am discussing the amendment of my hon. friend, I am pointing out why the amendment should be adopted. I say this measure is an attack on the federal system of the Government—the most serious attack that has yet been made. The hon. gentleman attacked that system when he disallowed the Streams Bill, and when he opposed the Controverted Elections Act of 1874, and the Privy Council said he was wrong. The hon. gentleman attacked that principle when he proposed the Licence Bill, and he is attacking it in proposing this Franchise Bill; and I tell my hon. friends from the Province of Quebec that this is a life and death struggle in upholding this constitution. I tell them that the hon. gentleman is making war upon the vital principle of this constitution. I tell them that if the hon. gentleman succeeds, unless the public opinion of this country politically destroys him, he will have destroyed the constitution.

An hon. MEMBER. Carried.

Mr. MILLS. No, the hon. gentleman must not cry carried. The Honorable First Minister has forced this question into committee before we had an opportunity of discussing the principles of the Bill on its second reading, and he must expect that these principles will be discussed in the committee on the details. We are fighting here, Sir, for Parliamentary Government, we are resisting the hon. gentleman's attempt to introduce the South American system of Government in preference to the English system of Parliamentary Government. That is the issue between us, and it is a question of whether the hon. gentleman shall succeed in introducing such a system as Santa Anna introduced into Mexico, or whether we shall retain the system we have. The question is a serious one, and let hon. gentlemen not under-estimate its importance. Let me call the attention of the House to an observation made by a great