

the Government do not possess his confidence. He referred to their antecedents, and spoke of their being opposed to each other before, and said that it was impossible for them to unite now for any good object. I think, sir, it will scarcely be denied that in looking back upon the antecedents of our public men, there is hardly one of any note who has not, during some portion of his life, found himself in such a position as to render it necessary for him to abandon views which he had previously maintained, and that no government has been successful which has not been founded upon mutual concessions. It is necessary that public men on both sides should unite in great emergencies in order to promote the general welfare. We know very well that those who are open to conviction very frequently change their course, and it is no disgrace to any one that under the influence of increased knowledge he has shaped his conduct in accordance with the degree of light which has surrounded him. The honorable gentleman knows very well that we must judge the actions of individuals not merely by their motives—for these we cannot often penetrate—but by the character and results of their actions. And so we must look upon the scheme now before us as it really is. We must examine it for ourselves, and unless we see clear evidence to the contrary, we ought to give its promoters credit for honesty and sincerity. I have no sympathy with those who willingly attribute the actions of public men to the influence of unworthy motives, when they may fairly claim to originate in the higher qualities of the mind and heart. It is the duty, I think, of all right-minded men to give this Government the credit of acting from high-minded motives. But supposing, for the sake of argument, that these honorable gentlemen had united for dividing among themselves offices of profit and emolument. It is fortunate that the germs of evil seldom attain to their complete development. Professions of patriotism do not always betoken the absence of selfishness. He has read history to little purpose who has not discovered that political dishonesty has frequently been not only harmless, but has been practically the minister of public good. The hon. member for North Ontario (Mr. M. C. CAMERON) stated the other day, that under Confederation Upper Canada would contribute an unequally large proportion of the amount necessary to sustain the machinery of the

Confederacy. He had a large array of figures before him; but as I took no notes of these figures, I am not prepared to dispute their correctness. But he forgot this, which is a matter of great importance to be considered, that under Confederation there will be a uniformity in the tariffs of the several provinces, and if the tariff of Canada is reduced so as to bring it into conformity with those of the Maritime Provinces, the disproportion will disappear. An hon. gentleman who afterwards addressed the House, and who, I regret, is absent from the House by reason of indisposition—the hon. member for Brome (Mr. DUNKIN)—I understood to say that nations and constitutions and governments owed their origin to that creative power to which all are indebted for existence and the means of perpetuating it. The idea is well expressed in the words of a celebrated writer:—"There is a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may." He (Mr. DUNKIN) then went on to question the honesty of the purpose of those gentlemen, Hon. Messrs. ROSS, GALT and CARTIER, who signed the despatch of 1858, which resulted in the Conference of last September. He described all the intermediate stages as "accidents," and then found fault with every item of the confederal arrangement. The hon. gentleman, on his own principles, should not criticise too severely the action of the Government. They might be only instruments in the hands of the Supreme Architect. The reasonable method would be to examine the arrangements or agreements of the Conference, and if the scheme is found to be based upon just and equitable principles, it must recommend itself to favorable consideration, and the inevitable conclusion is that it ought to be adopted. I confess I admire the arrangement, which has no doubt been arrived at after much care and deliberation. The commercial and financial parts of the scheme seem to me to be as just as, under the circumstances, they possibly could be. It is a very ordinary accomplishment to be able to find fault. It is much easier to destroy than to build up. We know that those so disposed might take up the best schemes ever devised by human ingenuity, and draw improper conclusions therefrom. In fact there is no form of government in the world but what, if badly administered, would be productive of evil. On the other hand, a scheme somewhat defective in itself, if placed in the hands of good and patriotic men, might be made to