

occasioned a "dead lock." I cannot, however, discover any force in this objection. This crisis in the political affairs of Canada led the statesmen of that Province to consider their position, with a view to remedy evils which were such as to render impracticable the further government of the Province under the existing constitution. I need not enumerate the many reasons which induced those statesmen to propose a Confederation of all the Provinces. They realised, among other things, the position in which these Provinces stand in relation to the neighbouring Republic, which, within the short space of four years, from being a purely commercial and agricultural people had become one of the greatest military and naval powers in existence. They had also received information from the Imperial Government to the effect that the people of the Colonies would be required to contribute largely to the cost of Fortifications, and other means of defence, as a condition of England's undertaking to co-operate in their defence. The Colonies have heretofore left it to England to provide and maintain fleets and armies for the security of their country at the cost of the taxpayers of Great Britain; and, Sir, I can see nothing unreasonable in the people of the Colonies being, at this day, called upon to contribute of their ability, to the cost of their defence. As subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, we have a right to demand the protection of the Mother Country; but if we have this right, we are most certainly under the obligation to contribute of our ability to the maintenance of those fleets and armies which are necessary for the defence of the Empire of which we form a part. If, Sir, the existence upon our borders of a vast military and naval power, rendering it prudent for the Colonies to prepare means for their defence, together with other reasons, can be adduced to prove that Confederation is essential to the maintenance of our institutions, and that it will promote our common prosperity, it matters not what were the peculiar circumstances in which the project of Confederation had its origin; whether it arose out of the political dissensions between Upper and Lower Canada, or resulted from less important causes. The first of the Resolutions just submitted reads as follows:—

1. *Resolved*, That the best interests, and present and future prosperity of British North America, would be promoted by a Federal Union, under the Crown of Great Britain, provided such Union could be effected on principles just to the several Provinces and Colonies.

I would willingly have advocated a Legislative Union of all these Provinces, but such a Union was believed to be unattainable. The resolution just read, is identical with the resolution of the Quebec Conference, and will, I believe, be supported by a large majority of this House. The leader of the Opposition—the Hon Mr. Coles—will certainly support me, so far as this resolution is concerned, seeing that the sentiment which it expresses was received by the Conference with acclamation. Union is strength, and strength in British America is certainly desirable. The second and third Resolutions are as follow:—

2. *Resolved*, That the existence of numerous Military and Naval forces in the neighbouring Republic, renders it especially incumbent on the people of British North America to take the most efficient precautionary measures by which their independence against foreign aggression may be secured.

3. *Resolved*, That a Union, such as in times of extraordinary danger would place the Militia, the Resources, and the Revenue of the several Provinces, at the disposal of a General Parliament, is necessary, in order to maintain the independence of British North America against foreign aggression, and to perpetuate our connection with the Mother Country.

To these, I apprehend, there will be no objection on the part of any honorable member. To defend our hearths and homes is, I trust, regarded by all as a sacred duty. It will, I assume, be generally admitted that the people of the British North American Colonies cannot defend

themselves against the power of the Great Republic upon our borders, should that warlike nation resolve to "gobble us up." Our safety, therefore, can only be secured by the powerful protection of the Mother Country; and in the event of a war with the United States of America, the resources of Britain, great as they are, would be taxed to the utmost, in order to save the Colonies from subjugation. England well knows this, and we may depend upon it that her statesmen are too wise, too mindful of the national honor to send out a few regiments, or a small fleet to suffer defeat. If we neglect to discharge our duty in providing for our safety, we may reasonably expect that England will withdraw her military and naval forces, and leave us to our fate. But on the other hand, if we show ourselves anxious to maintain our connection with England, and do that which is reasonably required of us, England will defend us to the utmost. It is to my mind very evident that we must choose between consolidation of the different Provinces and Colonies, and absorption into the American Republic. Consolidation,—the placing the revenues and the men of the several Provinces under the control of a central power would, in the event of a war, be absolutely necessary in order to the efficient organization of our colonial resources. In Britain as well as in the Colonies, the opinion is widely entertained, that our absorption into the Great Republic is inevitable. In the event of war between England and the United States of America, the battle ground would be the British Provinces. It has therefore been contended by some that in order to avert so great a calamity, the connection between the Provinces and the Mother Country should be severed by mutual consent, and that we should become an independent nation. Others, Sir, consider that it would be more to our interest to retain our connection with England, and to endure, if necessary, the horrors of war—that we should remain a portion of the Great Empire of Britain, continue to live under the glorious old flag, and our Monarchical institutions. The latter is the prevailing opinion. There is an influential party in England who, I believe, desire to get rid of these Colonies on the ground that they are an expense to the Empire; and because colonists do not accommodate their Customs Tariff to suit the manufacturers of Sheffield and Manchester. I have yet to learn, Sir, that the people of this Island have not a right to enjoy all the privileges of Englishmen to an equal extent with either Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, or Professor Goldwin Smith. Our right to these privileges, I consider, exists in virtue of our allegiance, and cannot be affected by our neglect to patronise or encourage the manufacturers of Sheffield or of Manchester. I have said, Sir, that as British subjects, we have our rights; but let it not be forgotten, Sir, that we have our obligations; and that chief among these obligations is that which demands that we shall contribute our full share to the cost of defending the Empire. With the strength of England available for our defence, I fear not the subjugation of the Provinces, so long as the inhabitants remain loyal. The inevitable result of a war with the United States of America would be the occupation of large portions of our territory by hostile soldiery; but the strongholds open to the sea would be held open against the gigantic power of the United States. If we once separate from Great Britain, we need not depend upon England's assistance should we ever be so unfortunate as to become embroiled with our neighbors. The manner in which the English Government recently acted towards Denmark is calculated to teach us a valuable lesson. Under a general organization the four millions of inhabitants in the Provinces could supply a formidable military force. Without such organization—which would be the result of Confederation—the Provinces separately can do little or nothing. We have recently had a discussion in this House on the subject of our Militia. To train the Militia of this Island would require an annual outlay nearly equal to our entire Revenue, and were our Militia to be