

bable result of our position. Suppose war was declared late in autumn, at the close of navigation—with the little means we have here of defending ourselves, we would be placed for five months in a very disagreeable and trying position, having no opportunity of obtaining the powerful succour of the Mother Country. (Hear, hear.) That must be so easily understood, that I shall make no further remark upon it. But, my statement about the province being placed upon an inclined plane may require some little comment and explanation. I say that, if we do not cultivate with our sister provinces—the Maritime Provinces—a close commercial, political, and social intercourse—being all of us British subjects, all of us monarchists, owing allegiance to the same Crown—if we neglect the cultivation of that intercourse, we run a great danger. We are, in our present position, small, isolated bodies, and it may probably be with us, as in the physical world, where a large body attracts to itself the smaller bodies within the sphere of its influence. If we do not make those alliances with the Lower Provinces—if we do not open with them those communications, political, social, and commercial, which are essential for our own interest, we shall little by little lose some of those principles we now esteem so much; we shall lose little by little our attachment to the Mother Country, and the interesting reminiscences which, with many of us, now give intensity to that attachment; and we shall become—you may depend upon it, hon. gentlemen—more and more democratised, before we are aware of it. (Hear, hear.) And really, hon. gentlemen, if I were to form my opinion by some of the speeches which we have heard in this Honorable House since this debate was opened, I think there are some hon. gentlemen who, from the way in which they have expressed themselves, might be supposed to be—although I hope in reality they are not—already half way down the inclined plane. (Hear, hear and laughter.) Well, hon. gentlemen, I say that if we want to avoid that, we must have a Federal union with our fellow-subjects of the British Provinces, and that besides we must have easy means of access to the seaboard, so that, in case of danger, help can be immediately forwarded to Canada and to all parts of this Federal union, and that we may have a powerful army of Great Britain coming here as an auxiliary to the defence which I hope we shall be able to make ourselves. (Hear, hear.) An honorable gentleman has stated that I expressed myself to the effect

that, if this Confederation did not take place, Canada could not become prosperous. I never said anything of the kind. I said expressly the contrary. Perhaps I may not precisely apprehend the meaning of the word “prosperous.” But I said this, that Canada had within itself all the means to become populous, to become wealthy, to become a great people. But on the other hand, I said that Canada and the other British American Provinces, without union, could not become a “powerful,” as distinguished from a prosperous people. I said that we in Canada could not become a powerful people unless we had some maritime elements, unless we had the means, by having harbors and ports of our own open at all seasons, of communicating freely with all the nations of the world. (Hear, hear.) That is what I said. I never stated that Canada could not become prosperous, make money, and so forth. No; I think Canada can do that; but Canada, even though its population should reach forty millions—which it may in a century hence—can never be a powerful nation, unless its power is felt all over the world; and how can its power be so felt, unless it has its seaports open all the year round? (Hear, hear.) And I said—“Point out to me the nation in this world which is powerful, that has not some maritime elements.” I say there is no one in the world. Every nation whose power has been felt over the globe, has been a nation that had some maritime outlet. But Canada, situated as it is, is in great want of free access to the sea; and, as long as we are shut up, during five months of the year, without being able to communicate with the rest of the world—for, notwithstanding our fine river, we cannot be said to have a real maritime element—we are in truth a dependent people. (Hear, hear.) I have some notes in French, made with the intention of answering honorable gentlemen who spoke in that language; but I think, having commenced, that I will go on in English. It has been asked by several honorable gentlemen how we were to make provision for the protection of the minorities in Upper and Lower Canada respectively. We have in Upper Canada a Catholic minority, in Lower Canada a Protestant minority. Well, those minorities are now in possession of certain rights; and, if we were not to legislate at all upon those rights, my interpretation of the scheme is, that they would still, under the local governments, enjoy the rights which they now possess. But it has been provided that, if necessary, addi-