

which the ministers of the Crown can carry in their pockets and put in force without the sanction of Parliament? No, it is a measure which must hereafter be laid on the table of this House, which must be debated, and upon which we shall all have an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion before it comes in force. At the proper time, a full opportunity will be afforded to those who dissent from the views of the Government, in regard to the constitutions of these provinces, of expressing their opinions, and of seeking to give effect to them. The same may be said in regard to the objections taken to the Intercolonial Railway. It is asserted that the Intercolonial Railway is something that we ought never to have agreed to. But honorable gentlemen will acknowledge, as a general proposition, that union is impossible without the railway, and such as believe that union is important and necessary, must be content to take the railway as a condition which is indispensable. But, honorable gentlemen, the Government cannot of itself build the Intercolonial Railway. There is no power either in this Government or the Governments of the other provinces to build it. We must come down to Parliament for the sanction—not to this Parliament, but to the Confederate Parliament, and the Confederate Parliament will have an opportunity of saying upon what terms we shall build the Intercolonial Railway. The fullest opportunity will be afforded for discussion before either the Intercolonial Railway is built, or the constitutions are adopted for Upper and Lower Canada. The former will be submitted to the Confederate Parliament; the latter, should the resolutions now before the House pass, to the present Parliament of Canada; for that must necessarily be a matter for the disposal of the Legislature of Canada. I am not one of those who would, as suggested, desire to take shelter behind the resolutions before the House for any unworthy purpose; but this I will say, that the amendment now before the House ought not to receive its sanction. I am quite satisfied that no honorable member of this House, who is really and truly an advocate of this scheme, and who believes that Confederation of all the provinces is important and desirable, will be found voting for this amendment, which would place a barrier in the way of Confederation, such as, perhaps, we could not overcome. Fancy the number of years during which this matter has been contemplated. As my honorable friend who sits near me pointed out, it is a measure which has

long been agitated. He shewed you that for years and years it has engaged the attention of almost every person who took any kind of interest in the public affairs of this country. I have only one thing to add to my honorable friend's elaborate statement on this point, and that is, to quote an extract from the resolutions proposed in this House many years ago by an honorable friend of mine, whom I am glad, and whom every one of his fellow members is glad to find still occupying his accustomed place in this House—I refer to my honorable friend Hon. Mr. MATHESON. In 1855, my honorable friend proposed a series of resolutions in this House against the elective principle, the last of which is in language prophetic of the result which now we are testing by actual experience. The resolution is in these words:—

8. *Resolved*.—That as the subject of a union of the whole of the British North American Provinces has for years occupied the public attention, it would manifestly be unwise to complicate future arrangements by a change in the Constitution of one of those provinces, which has not been sought for, and which this House believes, would not be acceptable to the others. It is, therefore, the opinion of this Council, that any proceedings on the subject at the present juncture would be premature, unwise, and inexpedient.

My honorable friend at that time looked forward to that which we now see about to take place—a union of these provinces—and he anticipated also that the elective system, if introduced into this branch of the Legislature, would be fraught with difficulty. It has been fraught with difficulty, and it is a difficulty which we must surmount—a barrier which we must strive to overcome. The personal objections which my honorable friend from Niagara division has started, are the poorest kind of objections. It is not what my honorable friend near me, or my honorable friend opposite, possibly thought or said at some remote period, that we have now to consider. We are all more or less exposed to this sort of attack; but fortunately the time during which I have had the honor of being in public life has been so short, and the position I have since occupied has been so obscure, that I am not so much exposed as many others to these accusations; but I am well aware that this is owing to my comparative insignificance. I must say that for my part I am disposed to put aside all these things. I am disposed to put aside all reference to what an honorable member may have done under other circumstances and in other times, and I would mere-