

judicial system : but an exception is made in favor of Lower Canada and our laws. There are also as many different tariffs as there are different provinces, as many commercial and customs regulations as provinces. It is true that there are now many free goods, but it is also correct to say that there are as many customs systems as there are provinces. And with respect to great colonial works, is it not true that it is impossible at the present day to undertake them, because the interests involved are too considerable, and because it is necessary to consult three or four legislatures ? By this it will be understood that it is almost impossible to reconcile so many different interests, except by uniting in one and the same legislature the representatives of those interests and of the people affected by them, and this object we cannot attain by remaining by ourselves. Currency and the interest of money are also regulated by different systems in the several provinces. There is one currency here, another in Newfoundland, another in Prince Edward Island, and so on. The shilling and pound of this province are different from the shilling and pound of Newfoundland and those of the other Maritime Provinces. But, with Confederation, all these matters would be placed under the control of one central legislature ; the currency would become uniform throughout, and capital might be everywhere invested without obstacle. So also it will be with respect to the rights of authors, patents for mechanical inventions, &c. When speaking of the Intercolonial Railway, I made no mention of the Pacific Railway, because I consider that we ought to devote our attention to accomplishing the works of which we at present stand in need. At a later period, when our resources and our population shall have sufficiently increased, we may direct our attention to the Pacific Railway. And should it become necessary, we can, with Confederation, hope to build it in less than ten years, whereas by remaining by ourselves as we are, we could not hope to have it for perhaps one hundred years. I think that I have now held up in a salient point of view the disadvantages of the *status quo*. The necessary consequence of what I have just demonstrated is that we cannot remain in the position in which we now are, whether we will or not. The question of representation based on population must be met ; that question must be settled. To say that we will grant it is to wish to place us in a position of inferiority, and I, for my part, will

never consent to place my section of the province in that position. Then there is another alternative that is proposed—annexation to the United States. I do not believe there is a single member in the House or out of the House who would consent to the annexation of Canada to the United States. But it is a question which must be examined when discussing that of Confederation, because it is one of the alternatives offered to us, and out of which we have to make a selection. What then would be our position in case we were annexed to the United States ? It is true that we should become an independent State in the American Confederation, but with the advantages accruing from such a state of affairs, we should likewise have the disadvantages. We should have to contribute towards the liquidation of the enormous debt which the United States have contracted in consequence of the war which is desolating one of the finest portions of the land ; we should have to pay the interest, and subsequently the principal itself, for I do not suppose that the Americans have the slightest intention of repudiating their debt. The debt would have to be paid, and to effect that, heavy imposts would have to be paid for a great number of years to provide the interest and sinking fund. Those who talk of the debt which is going to result from the Confederation should remember that it will be but a mere trifle compared with that for which we should become responsible under annexation. For one dollar that we shall have to pay under Confederation, we should have to pay six under annexation. It is said that the debt will be enormous, but it will only be as one dollar to four dollars in England, and six dollars in the United States. That is the financial aspect of annexation. But what would be the fate of the French-Canadians in the case of annexation to the United States ? Let us profit by the example of the French race in the United States, and enquire what has been the fate of the French in Louisiana ? What has become of them ? What has become of their language, their customs, their manners and their institutions ? After the war, hardly a trace will remain to show that the French race has passed that way. So far as religion is concerned, we might not find ourselves so badly off ; but we live in peace at the present day and are perfectly comfortable ; Catholics and Protestants have the same rights and religious liberty, and they live as peacefully together