

consider to be implied in this scheme. No, they are to look into this thing, to look into the details of what they evidently think to be a pretty crude scheme; while we, who are most interested, are required by our local rulers not to look into it at all, but just to accept it at their hands as a whole. The language addressed from the Throne to the Imperial Parliament is this: "Her Majesty has had great satisfaction in giving Her sanction"—to what?—"to the meeting of a conference of delegates from the several North American Provinces, who, on invitation from Her Majesty's Governor General, assembled at Québec." Certainly; we knew that before; they assembled without Her Majesty's sanction, but they got her sanction afterwards to their having so assembled. "These delegates adopted resolutions having for their object a closer union of those provinces under a central government. If those resolutions shall be approved by the provincial legislatures, a bill will be laid before you for carrying this important measure into effect"—not for giving full effect to the details of this scheme, but for carrying the measure—the closer union—in the shape the Imperial Government may give it, into effect. That is all. (Hear, hear.) Take this along with the despatch of the Colonial Secretary. If it is a declaration that this thing is a treaty, which may not be amended by us without flying in the face of Her Majesty's Government, I do not understand the meaning of words. (Hear, hear.) In connection with the Speech from the Throne, we had, the other night, some notice taken, on the floor of this House, of language used in discussing the address in the Imperial Parliament. Lords CLAREMONT, HOUGHTON, GRANVILLE and DERBY had something to say in respect of this scheme in the House of Lords; as also, Mr. HANBURY TRACY in the House of Commons. I do not attach great weight to what was there said, because there really was little said any way, and that little could not indicate any great amount of knowledge upon the subject treated. However, I will quote first what the mover of the address, the Earl of CLAREMONT, said. After referring to the war in New Zealand, he went on:—

My Lords, although these operations in India, New Zealand, and Japan, are matters of more or less interest or concern to the nation, and, as such, are fully deserving of notice, yet they are

small in comparison to the importance of the probable change in the constitution of our North American Colonies. Since the declaration of independence by the colonies, since known as the United States of America, so great a scheme of self-government, or one shadowing forth so many similar and possible changes, has not occurred.

Now, I cannot read this sentence without asking what analogy there is between this project and the declaration of independence. Why should these resolutions suggest to any one's mind the declaration of independence? Did the gentlemen who signed these resolutions in order to authenticate them—pledge their lives and fortunes, and I don't know what besides, to anything, or risk anything, by appending their signatures to the document? Was it a great exercise of political heroism? Why, the men who signed the declaration of independence qualified themselves in the eyes of the Imperial Government for the pleasant operations of heading and hanging. They knew what they were about. They were issuing a rebel declaration of war. But this is a piece of machinery, on the face of it at least, to perpetuate our connection with the Mother Country! Why then does it suggest the idea that so great a scheme of self-government, or one shadowing forth so many similar and possible changes, "hardly ever before occurred?" It is because there is, underlying the speaker's thought, just that idea of the anti-colonial school in England, that we are going to slip away from our connection with the Mother Country; and in this respect, therefore, it seems to him that it is like the declaration of independence. The remaining sentence indicates a curious misapprehension as to the present posture of this question. "If the delegates of these several colonies finally agree to the resolutions framed by their committee, and if these resolutions be approved by the several legislatures of the several colonies, Parliament will be asked to consider and complete this federation of our Northern American possessions." The noble lord, the mover of the Address, seems to take the resolutions for a mere report of a committee which (on their way here) had yet to be submitted to the consideration of the delegates! Next, I turn to the language of Lord HOUGHTON, the seconder of the Address; and from his lips too, we have an almost distinct utterance of the idea of our coming independence. He says:—