

TESSIER) at a public meeting held in Quebec in 1858, when the three delegates were in England pressing for Confederation. It is as follows:—

In 1849 and 1852 there were passed acts of our Provincial Parliament to give some kind of guarantee for the construction of this (the Intercolonial) Railway. As a member of the Canadian Legislature, I pledge my best support to help this enterprise, and as to the Canadian nationality, distinct from the English or French nationality, composed of the best qualities of both, to which allusion has been made, I share in this sentiment, and I hope to see growing a Canadian Empire in North America, formed by a Federal Union of all the colonies connected and linked together by this Intercolonial Railway, that may hold a position able to counterbalance the grasping power of the United States on this continent.

I refer to this able speech to show the enlightened views which that honorable member held on the subject, in common with many other distinguished public men. I have now done with the speech of the honorable member for Niagara, and will only say further that I hope the important subject before the House will be fully and completely discussed, so that the fine merits of the scheme may be thoroughly understood. I know it will be discussed calmly, with mutual forbearance and kindness, and with the excellent dispositions which honorable gentlemen usually bring to the consideration of the matters submitted for their judgment. (Hear, hear, and applause.) I feel satisfied that after such discussion the House will complete its share of this great work by assenting to the resolutions submitted for its approval. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. ALEXANDER said—I am sure that the members of the Government desire that this great question should be freely and fully discussed—I am sure they will be glad to see any members of this House frankly state wherein they conceived any of its details to be defective—I am sure that the suggestions by the honorable gentlemen who represent the divisions of Victoria and Wellington will be duly weighed by the present Administration, as any other suggestions made in the spirit to accomplish good. But some members in both branches of the Legislature appear to be opposed to the Confederation scheme *in toto*.—They hold that the constitutional changes proposed are unwise, and are fraught with great evil. The honorable member for Niagara Division (Hon. Mr. CURRIE) appears to be of that number, from the very strong appeal which he has made to this House against the whole measure, and I desire to reply to some

of the arguments which he pressed, no doubt with very great force and ability, upon our attention. He objects to the whole manner in which the Convention was formed; he has no faith whatever in the result of their deliberations. He maintains, in the boldest manner, that the proposed union will be found disadvantageous and burdensome to all the provinces uniting. He produced figures, prepared beforehand, to show that our burdens will be increased to the extent of at least \$3,000,000 per annum—an increase which will be found oppressive to the industry of the province of Canada. I cannot understand from what source he has obtained his figures to arrive at such a conclusion. There is no difficulty in our being able to form a reliable idea as to the future financial position of the proposed federal and local governments. If we make an estimate of the whole revenue of those provinces from their financial returns, taking the basis of 1863, we find that there will be a net revenue, available for the purposes of the General Government, after paying the subsidy of eighty cents per head to the local governments, amounting to the sum of \$9,643,108, while we are justified in assuming that the ordinary expenditure of the General Government will not exceed \$9,000,000. But, of course, there are always certain grants which are not classed under ordinary expenditure, and we shall have to provide for the Intercolonial Railway, and the widening and deepening of the St. Lawrence canals; and suppose that we allow the very liberal item of \$25,000,000 for those great objects, it will be admitted on all sides that we shall be enabled to obtain this amount under the Imperial Guarantee at four per cent., thus throwing upon the federal treasury the additional annual burden or charge of \$1,000,000, which we may, with perfect right, say will be met in the following manner. It can be clearly shewn that it rests entirely with ourselves, whether we cannot meet all the claims of ordinary expenditure and interest on the federal debt with the amount, already named, of \$9,643,108; while I am sure that most commercial men will allow that, with the power which we shall have of imposing uniform tariff and excise duties throughout the whole united territory of these united provinces, we shall raise sufficient additional revenue to meet this large item. But as I have, on a former occasion, said, we must inaugurate the dawn of our infant national career with the utmost care and prudence. All jobbery and lavish expenditure must be carefully avoided; and if we do so, I venture to