

another direction; to seek by free trade with our own fellow-colonists for a continued and uninterrupted commerce which will not be liable to be disturbed at the capricious will of any foreign country. (Hear, hear.) On this ground, therefore, we may well come to the conclusion that the union between these colonies is demanded alike on account of their extensive resources, and because of the peculiar position in which they stand relatively to each other, to Great Britain, and to the United States. All these are questions which fall within the province of the General Government, as proposed in the resolutions before the House, and whatever may be the doubts and fears of any one with respect to the details of the organization by which it is proposed to work the new system of Confederation, no one can doubt that the great interests of trade and commerce will be best promoted and developed by being entrusted to one central power, which will wield them in the common interest. (Hear, hear.)

I now come, Mr. SPEAKER, to the consideration of the second, and perhaps I may say the third division of my subject also—whether the material condition of these provinces is such as to make the union practicable, and whether the details of the measures proposed are equitable to each and to all. In considering this point, it is necessary for us first to review the liabilities of each province, the reasons why they were incurred, the objects which have been sought. In doing so, the House will not fail to remark that the same policy has animated the legislatures of all the provinces, or perhaps I should speak more exactly in saying those of Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The public debt of all these provinces has, with some slight exceptions, been incurred for public improvements, intended to develop the resources of the country, to attract immigration and wealth to their respective shores, to cheapen the means whereby the products of their farms were to be taken to market, and to reduce the cost of freight of articles which enter largely into the consumption of their inhabitants. Nor will any one fail to observe the intimate connection which all these public works have with each other—a connection which singularly illustrates the natural union which exists between these several provinces. If we consider the public improvements of Canada, her great canals intended to bring the trade of the vast countries bordering on the lakes down to the Gulf of St. Lawrence; if we look at the railway system forced upon us in our compe-

tition with American channels of trade, stretching from the extreme west to the extreme east of the province; and if we then look at the public works that have been undertaken in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, we find that, practically, they form parts of one great whole. It is through the St. Lawrence that the people of the Lower Provinces will send their fish, oils and other exports to the west, and it is through our canals and river that they will import the necessaries they require from the west. Through these canals and the river St. Lawrence, and along the railway systems of all the provinces, when hereafter connected, a great trade will flow in one uninterrupted stream, enriching in its course not only the cities of Canada, but also swelling the tide of a new commerce we may hope to see called into being in the open Atlantic ports of St. John and Halifax. (Hear, hear.) I will now proceed, sir, briefly to lay before the House a statement of the present engagements of the several provinces, beginning with Canada. I find that our whole debt, exclusive of the Common School Fund, which does not form a portion of our engagements relatively to the Lower Provinces, amounts to \$67,263,995. The debt of Nova Scotia is \$4,858,547, and that of New Brunswick \$5,702,991; and I may notice, with reference to the debts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, that in the case of Nova Scotia a portion of their liabilities, to the amount of nearly half a million of dollars, consists of treasury notes, while the policy has been pursued both in that province and in New Brunswick of retaining in the hands of the Government the Savings Bank deposits of the people, which form, therefore, a part of the liabilities I have named to the extent of \$1,167,000. It must, therefore, be observed that the rate of interest on the debts of these two colonies is not, on the whole amount, higher than that which the bulk of the Canadian debt now bears. Newfoundland has only incurred liabilities to the extent of \$946,000, bearing interest at five per cent., while Prince Edward Island owes \$240,673. The total liabilities of those provinces are, therefore, \$11,748,211, against the interest on which may be placed the net revenues of the railways which are the property of those provinces, and which produced last year a net amount of about \$100,000. In addition to the existing liabilities of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, there are certain further engagements they have incurred for the extension of their railway system requiring future provision to the extent, in the case of Nova Scotia, of