

destinies of British America, that even the census of 1871 may show that we possess a population of from eight to ten millions. I must confess, Mr. SPEAKER, that I cannot understand how any hon. gentleman can stand up here, and labor to perpetuate our present insignificance, by interposing obstacles to the carrying out of the only really great or statesmanlike idea which has ever been brought under the consideration of a Canadian Parliament. And now, sir, though I have already trespassed too long upon the patience of hon. members, I must crave their indulgence a moment longer, while touching briefly upon the subject of defence. Mr. SPEAKER, without discussing the question of how much or how little we ought to contribute towards the defence of the Empire, in a war with any other nation than the United States, I assume that every true Canadian, whether of French or British origin, will be prepared to resist the invasion of his native soil; and if I am right in this, I take it, all we have to do is to inform the home Government that we are determined—not to contribute so much in men, and so much in money, to the defence of Canada, but that we are resolved—that every man and every farthing we can control shall be sacrificed before we submit to the power of our republican neighbors, and that all we ask of England is to pursue a course becoming the glory of her ancient renown. That she will do this, sir, we have no reason to doubt; but I regret to observe that Colonel JERVOIS, in his report upon the subject of fortifications, seems altogether to have ignored the Western Peninsula, for he makes no mention of any point west of Hamilton as capable of being fortified, from which I infer he must have come to the conclusion that in the event of war with the United States, it would be impossible for us to hold the country above the head of Lake Ontario. Sir, this may be the opinion of that gallant officer, and it may be correct; but, as the representative of the most exposed portion of the western frontier, I am bound at least to say that the people of that part of the country would be most unwilling to admit that they are less able now to hold their own than their fathers were in 1812. Mr. SPEAKER, our chief danger lies in the possibility of a reunion with the North and South, upon the basis of the Monroe doctrine; for unhappily the course pursued by England, so far from conciliating either

party, has only engendered feelings of hostility in the minds of the people of both sections; and for the belligerents to combine their united forces against a common enemy, and that enemy one whom they both hate as intensely as they do England, would be an event which could excite no surprise in the minds of any one acquainted with the feeling which prevails among the masses of republican America. Sir, talking of fortifications and defence, no force we can bring into the field, no line of forts we can build, nor, indeed, any course that could be adopted, would so effectually protect us, so absolutely guarantee the inviolability of our soil as the recognition of the independence of the Southern States by Great Britain; and when the proposed deputation from this Government reaches England, I trust they will feel it to be their duty strongly to urge the consideration of this fact upon Her Majesty's Government; for with a powerful British fleet upon their coast, a formidable, warlike and bitterly hostile nation bordering them upon the South, and some half million well armed and resolute Canadians in their front, depend upon it, Mr. SPEAKER, we need be under no apprehension of war's alarms. And now, sir, it only remains for me to thank honorable members for the patient hearing they have accorded me, and to express a hope that the deputation to England will not swerve from the course they have informed us they intended to pursue, in consequence of anything that has transpired in any of the other provinces, but that they will impress upon the home Government the fact that four-fifths of the people of British America are represented by this House, which sustains the scheme of union by an overwhelming majority; that they will urge the Imperial Ministry to exert all the influence they can command in a constitutional manner, to induce the people of the Lower Provinces to reconsider their recent course, and to acquiesce in the project agreed upon by the Quebec Conference as the basis of an arrangement by which a balance of power may be established on this continent, the spread of republicanism checked, and our own immediate prosperity and future influence insured to such an extent as to secure for us a higher degree of consideration while we retain a colonial position, and qualify us hereafter to take our place among the family of nations, still animated by sentiments of reverence for the great people under whose fostering