

and yet constitutional changes are proposed in order to soothe the discontent of the people and the agitation of the country." Well! let us suppose that the gentlemen are right—for it is true that the year has not been a good one in respect of business, and it is natural that such should be the case, in view of the position of the crisis through which America is now passing, and but little else can be expected; the harvest has not been a very good one,—however, allowing that these gentlemen are right, it is not the less true that we are relatively in a state of quietude and great prosperity, and it is just at the present time, when we are in a state of tranquillity and can do it in perfect liberty, that we should adopt means to settle our internal difficulties. It is not during a time of trouble or a civil war that we can do it, and therefore we ought to profit by the opportunity which is now offered us. A Constitution will not last unless it is elaborated with the care, the deliberation and the calm consideration which can be devoted to it only in time of peace. We are now at peace with our neighbors, our friends are in a large majority, the question is known to the country and has been considered for several months past, and our duty is to do now in time of peace, what it is impossible to do in time of trouble. We ought also to labor to enlighten public opinion on the subject of this plan of Confederation, not by appeals to its prejudices, but by free and open discussion, and by wise counsel based on that truth which should always be our guiding star. I am, therefore, disposed to vote in favor of the resolutions which are submitted to us. When I became aware that the Government were bringing forward this scheme of Confederation, I said to myself that we were about to be liberated from colonial leading-strings, and that we were about to become a people, and I expected the House would approach the question with due regard to its greatness; some hon. members have undoubtedly done so, but I regret that many others have not been able to raise themselves above the narrow considerations of party. The question has been discussed by statesmen on this side of the House at least; but on the other side it has been made a miserable question of party and of taxation. With these few remarks, I shall conclude by stating that it is my determination to vote in favor of the scheme submitted to us.—(Applause.)

MR. BEAUBIEN—MR. SPEAKER, I do not rise to make a long speech, for I freely acknowledge that it is not in my power to do so; and besides, the question which is submitted to us has been so well discussed by those who have preceded me, and who are in a better position than myself to judge of the condition and requirements of the country, that the subject is almost exhausted. I only wish, by rising on this occasion, to record my presence at the debates which are in progress on this question, and to state in a few words what the reasons are which induce me to support this measure. The peculiar position of the British North American colonies and their proximity to the United States, call upon them to unite together in order to form a stronger nation, and one more able to withstand the onslaught of an enemy, should it be necessary so to do, and to increase their prosperity in a material point of view. There is one fact which must not be forgotten, and which I must mention—it is that when France abandoned this country, and England took possession of it, from that moment French immigration entirely ceased and gave way to immigration of persons of foreign origin—of British origin. From that period the English population increased from day to day in this country, and at the present time the French-Canadians are in a minority in United Canada. Under these circumstances, I am of opinion that it would be at once an act of imprudence and one characterised by a lack of generosity on our parts to wish to prevent the majority of the population of the country from displaying greater aspirations for our common country, and from desiring its advancement and more rapid progress in an onward direction, at the same time drawing closer the bonds which unite us to the Mother Country. I have reflected on these matters, and although I am not disposed to submit to injustice to my country or my countrymen, yet I am ready to enter into a compromise with persons of other origins. I consider, moreover, that since we are satisfied with our position as English subjects, and with the Constitution which we are allowed freely to exercise, we should do all in our power to increase England's interest in her colonies; and for my part, I consider that the means of so doing is to accept the Confederation which is proposed to us. Not long since discontent was manifested in England among a part of the com-