

taining any extent of population, there is no barrier to our extension and material progress. (Hear, hear.) We must feel that such a field for human enterprise and such a position is calculated to give our people higher aspirations, and to make them cherish what may at the present moment be pronounced at this stage of our infancy but a dream; that just as the Russian Empire extends its powerful sway from the Black Sea to the polar regions, so may the people of British North America aspire to raise up a great Northern Power upon this continent, which shall be distinguished for the wisdom and stability of its institutions, which shall emulate the parent countries from which its races have sprung, in developing their manly virtues, and in diffusing the blessings of a higher civilization wherever its population may flow. (Cheers.)

HON. MR. VIDAL said he cordially agreed with the honorable gentleman who had spoken in desiring a union of the provinces, and with the Honorable Premier in believing that if such union could be arranged to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned, it ought to be effected. Without exactly committing himself to the opinion of the Honorable Premier that this country was upon an inclined plane which, if the proposed scheme of Confederation were rejected, would land us in the United States, he nevertheless thought that the arguments which he had advanced to demonstrate the necessity of some change which would secure our future exemption from the difficulties by which we were now beset were unanswered and unanswerable. Yet he was obliged to express his disapproval of the manner in which the scheme had been submitted to Parliament, as the course adopted entirely precluded the Legislature from suggesting any improvement or modification of its details. He felt, in common with all other honorable members, that the subject was one of vast importance; that we were not legislating for the mere purpose of escaping from unpleasant party political difficulties, but for the safety and prosperity of our country and the welfare of our children and descendants, and therefore could not agree with the honorable member for Brock (Hon. Mr. BLAIR), that immediate action was necessary and that any delay was dangerous. Notwithstanding all that had been said of this country being acquainted with the scheme and prepared to adopt it, he did not and could not believe that such was the case; in arranging its details no advice or assistance had been sought from the representatives of the people, and the people themselves were to have no

voice in the matter. The scheme was assumed to be perfect, and being perfect, must be adopted by the House without change or modification of any kind. It was said that nine-tenths of the people were in its favor; he believed that a very large majority approved of the general principle of union, but there were details of the plan which did not pass unchallenged. It was much to be regretted that the resolutions had not been introduced in such a way as would have permitted the House to place upon record its views in respect to any part of them which might be unacceptable, and to suggest to the Imperial authorities who might frame the bill, such amendments as it considered desirable. He thought the honorable member for Wellington (Hon. Mr. SANBORN) was in error in proposing the amendments of which he had given notice,—the resolutions before them were not, properly speaking, resolutions of the House, they must be regarded as a mere statement of certain agreements entered into by other parties and communicated to us for our information, and consequently could not in any way be altered or amended. Honorable members were thus placed in an anomalous position—invited to discuss the whole subject freely and their assistance requested, and at the same time informed that no change would be effected—that in fact the only assistance wanted was the voting for the adoption of the scheme as a whole. Whatever doubts may exist as to the change the proposed union might effect either for good or for ill, he thought there was no doubt that there would necessarily be a vast increase of expense in carrying on the Government: without mentioning specific sums, it must be obvious that Canada would have to maintain two local legislatures with all their appurtenances, in addition to her share of the expense of the Federal Legislature, which latter could scarcely be expected to be less than at present. With regard to the proposed change in the constitution of the Legislative Council, he was far from considering it a wise step; like the honorable member for Niagara (Hon. Mr. CURRIE), he had great regard for the right of the franchise as now enjoyed by the people, and felt that it would be improper to vote away that privilege of his constituents without their authority or assent. He had been sent here by them to assist in legislating under the Constitution we now have, and not to change it. It was admitted by all that the elective system had operated advantageously, and why then should it be abandoned?—why initiate a retrograde move-