

amounted to a declaration of war, and at a much earlier period of our history, it would have been so regarded.

When such views are held in England, when so strong a desire is manifested in Canada to maintain our connection with England, and to remain under the sheltering folds of that flag we love so well, shall it be said that we have not the spirit left to defend ourselves? I know, sir, that the people of Canada will not be backward, should ever that time arrive. I feel that there is some of the spirit of 1812 still left among us. I am convinced that the blood of those men who left the United States, when they gained their independence, and who gave up all in order to live under the protection of the laws of Old England—the blood of those old U. E. Loyalists, I say, still courses through our veins. (Hear.) Sir, I trust that this union may be consummated, in order that British power on this continent may be consolidated, our connection with the Mother Country cemented and strengthened, and that under this union this country may be made a happy home for hundreds of thousands of emigrants from the Mother Country—a happy and contented home for all now living here, and for our children and children's children for generations to come. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

MR. CARTWRIGHT, said—MR. SPEAKER, the turn which this debate has assumed of late is somewhat remarkable. Up to a very recent period, hon. gentlemen opposite have dwelt chiefly on the extreme—I think they even said the indecent—haste with which this project has been pushed forward. They have asserted that this scheme was the sole, the only bond of union between the members of the present Ministry, and further, that so rash, so inconsiderate was their eagerness to effect their end at any cost, that they have seriously compromised our interests by undue concessions to the remaining provinces, and notably to Newfoundland and New Brunswick. Latterly, however, the question has assumed a new and different phase. It has been discovered that so far from being a bond of union, the project of Confederation is a mere pretext, a blind to cover their predetermination to maintain their position at all hazards. Now, sir, passing over the obvious inconsistency of these contradictory accusations, passing over the absurdity of calling the Confederation the sole bond of union, and yet a sham to cover that union, I shall have a few words to say as to the reasons which induced me, in com-

mon with a great majority of this House, and I believe with a great majority of the people of this country, to support honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches, not only as regards the project we are now discussing, but as to their general policy in effecting the extraordinary fusion of parties which took place last summer. Sir, it is idle to talk of that step as if those honorable gentlemen were alone responsible for their conduct on that occasion. What they did was done with the full knowledge and consent of their supporters, and reflects on our honor, if wrong, quite as much as on theirs. But, sir, I am very far indeed from admitting that we were wrong. I think the reasons which influenced us then were strong enough to justify us fully; those reasons are tenfold stronger now. To understand them, MR. SPEAKER, we need only glance at the parliamentary history of the last few years, and then ask ourselves whether any language is too strong, any sacrifice too great, to put an end to the state of things which prevailed throughout that period. But first, sir, let me pause to deal with the charge of undue haste. Doubtless the rapidity with which these negotiations have advanced was as remarkable as it was unexpected. I believe there is hardly an instance in which a political project of such magnitude and delicacy has made such astonishing progress in so short a time; and so far from holding it an objection, so far from allowing that this is any evidence that the country has been taken by surprise in assenting to this scheme, I hold that it is, on the contrary, the best possible omen of its ultimate success, no matter what temporary checks it may encounter, because it shows conclusively not only how zealously and honestly Ministers have devoted themselves to the task of carrying it into effect, but, which I think of even more importance, because it proves how powerfully the events of the last few years have contributed to mature men's views on this subject, and shows that, so far as this province is concerned, my honorable friends are but aiding to carry out a foregone conclusion—a conclusion long since arrived at by every man among us who desires to maintain our independence or our connection with the British Crown; that in this, or some such scheme as this, lies our best, if not our only hope of escaping absorption into the great republic which adjoins us. Sir, this is an argument which perhaps has more weight with me than with some hon.