

natural outlet for the products of the Western States, which in 1863 amounted to the enormous quantity of five hundred and twenty million bushels of grain—they will be dependent upon us, instead of our relying upon them. Compared with the St. Lawrence navigation the Erie canal is but a ditch, and it is closed by the frost earlier in the season than our lake and river navigation. When all these advantages which we enjoy are considered, the people of the United States will see how much better it is to live on terms of friendship and amity with us, instead of, to use a vulgar but forcible phrase, “cutting off their nose to spite their face.” (Hear, hear.) With regard to the proposed resolutions, I stated at the outset that there were portions of the scheme to which I objected, and I may now, sir, be allowed briefly to advert to them. I would prefer that the whole power was concentrated under one head by a legislative union, rather than a Federal union. I fear that the machinery will be complex, and that we will find, under the proposed system, that the expenses of the Government will be much greater than if we had one General Government without these additions of local legislatures for each of the provinces. (Hear, hear.) But I am happy to say that the proposed Federal system is not a reflex of the old Federal union of the United States. Notwithstanding some honorable gentlemen have praised the Federal system in the States as worthy of imitation, still I think our proposed system much to be preferred. It differs in this—the United States Federal system was formed from a number of sovereign states, with sovereign powers, delegating to a central power just as much or as little of their power as they chose; thereby the doctrine of state rights obtained, and, as we have seen within the last four years, has been the cause of bloodshed and civil war, it may be to the probable destruction of that Federal union. Our case is exactly the reverse. Instead of the Central Government receiving its power from the different provinces, it gives to those provinces just as much or as little as it chooses. Hear what the 45th resolution says—“In regard to all subjects in which jurisdiction belongs to both the general and local legislatures, the laws of the General Parliament shall control and supersede those made by the local legislatures, and the latter shall be void so far as inconsistent with the former.” This places the whole control in the hands of the

General Government, making the union as nearly legislative as the circumstances of the various provinces would admit. So much is this the case that the hon. member for Hochelaga fears that it would eventually result in a legislative union—a result to my mind most devoutly to be desired. (Hear, hear.) There are two or three more of the points of the resolutions to which I have objection. The public lands are placed at the disposal of the local legislatures; immigration also is in the hands of the local legislatures, and the seacoast fisheries are in the hands of the local legislatures. These are matters common to the whole, and should, for many reasons, be under the control of the General Government. These various interests, however, are all covered by the 45th resolution of the Conference which I have just read, and which declares that when consistent with the welfare of the General Government, their control will be taken from the local legislatures. (Hear, hear.) I have, as briefly as possible, shewn that in my opinion, in our political and our commercial relations we would be benefited by the union of Canada with the Maritime Provinces. I have also adverted briefly to the objections which I hold to the proposed mode of carrying out the union. I shall now endeavor to show that as a means of defence it is highly desirable. If there is one thing more desirable than another, it is to have the whole forces of the country under one governing power. How might it fare with us, in case of war or invasion, with the provinces disunited? Objections could now be made against the withdrawal of a portion of the militia from one province to the others, without the consent of the government of that province, and before they could be brought into the field, valuable time would be lost, red-tapeism would stand in the way, and the delay might be dangerous. (Hear, hear.) By being united and controlled under one head, troops could be thrown upon any point attacked, at a moment's notice. Objections have been made by hon. gentlemen to any expenditure for the purpose of building fortifications, at proper points, for the defence of the country; but I am satisfied there is no reasonable sum that may be required that will be grudged by the people of Canada; for if there is any purpose for which they will contribute cheerfully, it is for the defence of their country, and to continue the connection and cement the tie that binds us to the Mother Country.