

authority of Legislature to do so, without the power to appropriate our revenue for our own immediate benefit. A great part of the allowance of £80,000 or £100,000 a year would be required to keep up the machine, paraphernalia of a local Government, and local Legislature. All that was said last night upon the subject, was merely a repetition of what was urged for the same the Union has benefited. I have in fact nothing new to advance against it, and I will, therefore, say no more but that I heartily support the Resolutions submitted by the Hon. the Leader of the Government. Although it must admit, I see nothing objectionable to the Resolution submitted, in so-called words, by my hon. friend the member for St. Peter's (Mr. W. Wells).

Hon. COL. GRAY, apologised for his absence from the House for the last two or three days, which, he explained, had been occasioned by indisposition. The Resolution which had been submitted by the Hon. the Leader of the Government, he presumed he had before him in the Legislative Summary; but he was not exactly aware of the purport of the amendment which it seemed, had been submitted thereto. He would, therefore, feel obliged by the Chairman's reading it for his information.

The Chairman having, in compliance with the request of the hon. and gallant Colonel, read the amendment submitted by the Lib. Mr. Wells, the Hon. Col. Gray spoke as follows: I will say I am glad that I have now, in my place, an opportunity to give my opinion upon the Resolutions submitted by the Hon. the Leader of the Government. It appears to me that the House is saying, — as, by the words of the second of those Resolutions, they are made to do, — that the Government admit that a Federal Union of the North American Provinces and Colonies, which would include Prince Edward Island, could ever be accomplished upon terms that would prove advantageous to the interests and well-being of the people of this island. It is a most arrogant and almost impious manner, assuming to themselves two of the grand attributes of the Deity — prescience and omniscience. I may say I would be very sorry to have my name be a supporter of such a Resolution, destined for transmission to posterity. I do not look for posthumous fame; and I regard popular applause as little, perhaps, as most people do; but I regard my own benevolence, and nothing, I trust, will ever induce me to give my sanction or endorsement to any act, project, or declaration; which, through its cool and dispassionate exercise of my judgment, I cannot conscientiously approve. I regard my own conscience much more than my thoughts of future fame or prospect of moderate popular applause. As a parliamentary representative of the people, I endeavour to act in accordance with its dictates. On every public question which comes before the Assembly, I claim the right to exercise my conscientious judgment, independently of all party connection or consideration; and that right I not only most willingly concede to every other member of the House, but I most absolutely demand that every member exercising whatever share of the question at issue may be, he may freely exercise it. The hon. member from Chateauguay (Mr. Conroy) has very properly said, if I understand him rightly, that nothing more than was enunciated upon the question of Federal Union, in the last Session, could now be advanced concerning it. In the law of the Resolutions against the Union, agreed to by the majority of the Hon. House, I am, it is said, — "That the House disapprove of the recommendation of the Quebec Convention; and, on the part of Prince Edward Island, emphatically declines a Union, which, after serious and careful consideration, it believes would prove politically, commercially, and financially disastrous to the rights and interests of the people." This, surely, was language strong enough; and the simple re-affirmance now, without the most careful and serious consideration of the Convention, of the principle of resistance and non-recognition, ought to have had the effect of obviating of Confederation from the House. On my return from Canada, in 1858, I publicly declared that, in my opinion, simple justice to the people demanded that no

further action, either executive or legislative, should be taken either for or against the proposed Union, until after they should have had an opportunity to personally consider it at the hustings. (There was a murmur at this, and I again, my opinion, and I therefore said that this House is not in a position to pronounce constitutionally upon the matter. Whether the people are yet rightly comprehended the question is all its feature, it is not for me to determine. But my individual opinion is that they have not yet, through the habits of any communities to partial themselves, been enabled to arrive at such full understanding of the subject, as to be in a position to pronounce upon it, it is necessary they should attain so. On this subject has been before, have submitted to their consideration, no question so likely to arouse their prejudices, and with reference to which, there has been so great a probability of misapprehensions on their part; has ever before been proposed to them for solution. They are called upon to deal with a matter of such gravity and importance as, according to their decision concerning it, either will or will not, in the whole nature of our Constitution; and, therefore, it seems to me to be absolutely necessary that, before they form a final judgment upon it, they should be enabled to understand the measure in all its bearings, and have ability to look upon it with an enlarged and comprehensive view." I do not see, however, that any remarks made to this House, at the time, last in any way alter the state of the question; nor can I perceive that it is misunderstood, as we are, by our constituents with regard to it; we can with any regard to constitutional propriety, take action upon it. So long, being my view of the present state of the question, it is only in consequence of the unexplained features of the Resolutions which have been submitted by the Hon. the Leader of the Government, and which I apprehend will be sustained and carried by a majority of the House, that I deem it necessary to make upon the subject. The Resolution which asserts that, this House cannot wait that a Federal Union of the North American Provinces and Colonies, which would include Prince Edward Island, could ever be accomplished upon terms that would prove advantageous to the interests and well-being of the people of this island. "I must not every together with such advice as it thus ever again entertaining the question, how changes shall, and how much more favourable the result may be the terms upon which acceptance of Confederation may be required of the Colony. Nothing can be more preposterous than such a Resolution. We do not see what changes even a single day will bring forth. And yet, if all the events of futurity were laid open to our view, we are called upon to decide against the proposed Union of these Provinces upon any terms. We talk of this island being cut off and separated by all the South-West of it, from the neighbouring Provinces? Science will yet overcome the obstruction of this Barrier. It is obstructed intercourse and communication with the Mainland, by properly fitted steam-propellers may yet be secured to us in the winter season. What is the Barrier which Britain cannot overlook? But, if the Island is to be bound by the Resolutions in question, it will indeed be more effectually cut off from the Mainland, by the Barrier of Politics, and — looked for ever all participation in the growing strength, wealth, and prosperity of the Confederation of Provinces, it will have little prospect for the future beyond a distant existence, or ultimate absorption into the neighbouring Republics. The great burden of all the expenses which have been delivered in the Island, both in this House and out of it, against Confederation, has been that the terms offered to us will not compensate with our wants or our needs, and our exceptional political demands that they would be — that they are not sufficiently favorable. But now, by these Resolutions, you shut yourselves out from the acceptance of any terms which may be offered, however favorable they may be. In declaring that a Union of these Provinces can never be effected, on terms favorable to Prince Edward Island, you are going to guarantee the terms of Confederation. The hon. and gallant Colonel, then ridiculed the idea which had been put forth by some anti-con-