

care we have attained our majority, and with whom, I trust, we shall always continue to maintain the closest alliance. (Cheers.)

MR. DUFRESNE (Montealm) — Mr. SPEAKER, in rising at this moment to express my humble opinion on the merits of the resolutions now under discussion by this House, I do not intend to follow the formula or preamble hitherto invariably adopted, by saying that I approach the subject with fear and trembling. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) But though I do not approach the question with anxiety and hesitation, it is not that I feel myself more competent than others for the treatment of it; it is simply for the good reason that I rely upon the indulgence of this House. We all know how difficult it is for a person who is not an habitual public speaker, or a member of the legal profession, to express himself with facility before a distinguished and highly educated body of men such as I now have the honor to address. I look upon the resolutions submitted to us as expressing the sentiments of the people, through their constitutional organ the Legislature. We ask our Sovereign and the Imperial authorities to unite, by means of a Federal union, all these Provinces of British North America. In examining this question, and in order to express more clearly and fully my opinion of these resolutions, I may say that I accept them for many reasons, but chiefly as a means of obtaining the repeal of the present legislative union of Canada, and securing a peaceable settlement of our sectional difficulties. I accept them, in the second place, as a means of obtaining for Lower Canada the absolute and exclusive control of her own affairs. I accept them, thirdly, as a means of perpetuating French-Canadian nationality in this country. I accept them, fourthly, as a more effectual means of cementing our connection with the Mother Country, and avoiding annexation to the United States. I accept them, fifthly and lastly, as a means of administering the affairs of the country with greater economy. Such are my reasons for accepting the Confederation scheme submitted to us by the Government. (Hear, hear.) I shall not undertake to discuss the merits of all the resolutions, for the honorable gentlemen who have already spoken have ably and fully developed the merits of the whole question; and, besides, if I may dare say it without being thought ridiculous, I have undergone a heavy loss—I have, in fact, been plundered. The honorable member

for Vaudreuil (Mr. HARWOOD) is the offender—(laughter)—but I cannot complain much of this, for the theft has turned to the advantage of the House. What he has stolen from me is the history of the Helvetic and Germanic Confederations; but inasmuch as he has set forth the facts in a far more able manner than I myself could have done it, and as the House has been a gainer thereby, I must endeavor to practise a proper degree of resignation under my own heavy affliction. (Hear, hear.) I intended to have said something on the Helvetic and Germanic Confederations, but as I have been thus despoiled, and as the honorable member for Vaudreuil has treated the subject so powerfully, I shall refrain from entering into the matter. And here again the House will be the gainer. (Laughter.) As the question of Confederation itself has already been fully treated with far more ability than my own feeble powers would enable me to bring to bear upon the discussion, I will confine myself to answering certain statements made by honorable members of the Liberal party *par excellence*. Contrary to the opinions of the Church, or rather of the Head of the Church, who declares that the name Liberal cannot be allied with the doctrine of the Church, we have seen the extreme Liberals coming forward in this House as the champions of the Church and of its ministers. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) The honorable member for Richelieu gave us in pompous terms a sketch of the benefits derived from the union of the Canadas. I must say that I listened to him with no little astonishment, for it was the first time I ever heard a democrat—a demagogue—lauding the union and the public men whom the country has, since the union, placed at the head of affairs. (Hear, hear.) He told us that we had had statesmen who succeeded in securing a triumph for the rights of Lower Canada—men who protected our interests and caused us to advance in the path of progress. “We see them in their works,” he says—“see the progress the country has made under the union; look at our primary-school system and our university system; look at the establishment of our ocean line of steamers, bearing our products to Europe, and returning to us freighted with the wealth of every foreign country! See that magnificent work, the Grand Trunk Railway, which is without a parallel in the world! See our splendid canals, the finest works of the kind in existence.” Really, Mr. SPEAKER, I am utterly