

receive favorable consideration from any considerable number of hon. members, and that to move them would only be to attract attention to what might be looked upon as my own eccentricities. I accordingly abandoned the idea of pressing them at that time. But, with the leave of the House, I will now read the motion, which is as follows:—

Mr. RANKIN—On Wednesday next (30th of April, 1856)—Committee of the Whole on the general state of the province, for the purpose of considering the subject of a union of the British North American Colonies, with a view to an address to Her Majesty to recommend the same to the consideration of the Imperial Parliament.

This, sir, I am happy to say, is the proposal which the Government are now carrying out. (Hear, hear.) This was what I proposed nine years ago, and I shall have the greatest pleasure now in giving them my hearty support while they endeavor to carry it into effect; and I congratulate them on having, though so long after myself, arrived at the same conclusion. (Hear, hear.)

HON. J. S. MACDONALD—It was advocated long ago by Bishop STRACHAN and other gentlemen.

Mr. RANKIN—Far be it from me to deny that these gentlemen are entitled to the credit of having suggested the idea, long before I was of an age to think of anything of the kind. But I may congratulate myself that I had conceived the same idea—without borrowing it from them—which had been previously advocated by men so distinguished and illustrious. (Hear, hear.) The result shews, however, that in looking upon the movement as then premature, the Hon. Attorney General was right, and that he correctly understood the feelings of the country; for I am willing to admit that the course of events has proved that it was premature. But, had it not been for certain occurrences which I shall not comment upon (since to do so might savor of a spirit unbecoming on this occasion)—had it not been for the extraordinary state of things brought about before the formation of this Coalition, I am not prepared to acknowledge that it would have been thought of, as a practical scheme, for twenty years to come. But now honorable gentlemen have taken it up, and it only remains for me to congratulate them on having done so. When this Coalition was proposed, after the vote which resulted in the defeat of the CARTIER-MACDONALD Ministry, the honorable member for South Oxford, the Hon. President of the Council,

and then recognized leader of the Opposition, did me the honor to invite me to a meeting of his supporters. Though I never was one of his followers—having been all my life, in the proper sense of the word, a conservative—still I was associated, for the time, with the gentlemen forming the party of which he was chief; and I think they will do me the justice to admit, that while allied with them, I acted in good faith, and they all knew that, though I was with them, I was not of them. (Hear, hear.) At the meeting of the Opposition, called by the Hon. President of the Council, the project now under consideration was submitted; and in justice to that gentleman, I am bound to say he made a frank, clear and intelligible explanation of the terms which had been agreed upon between himself and the other section of the Government. He informed us fully of all that had taken place between the negotiating parties, and submitted to us the question whether we would support him in the step he had taken, and support the Government which was to be organized for the purpose of carrying out this project. Much was said after those explanations, and to the best of my recollection of what occurred—for I have not since refreshed my memory by reading the report of the proceedings—there was a general assent to the project. Though some hon. gentlemen did entertain views peculiar to themselves, and expressed opinions that perhaps did not convey a hearty or cordial assent, yet there was a unanimous consent that this Government should be formed. (Hear, hear.) I think every one assented to that proposal. I, at all events, fully assented to it in good faith—(hear, hear)—and in doing so, my meaning was to allow the fullest latitude to those hon. gentlemen to concoct the best scheme they could, and to sustain them in working it out. I had no trick in my mind. I did not mean, as some honorable gentlemen seem to have meant, to place them in a false position, and afterwards assail them. (Hear, hear.) I honestly meant to empower them to confer with delegates from the other provinces, and to endeavor to bring about an understanding by which a union of some sort might be accomplished. (Hear, hear.) It is true that there was one feature in the explanations given by the Hon. President of the Council which was not acceptable to me, but it was not of a character which rendered it necessary for me to make any remark at the time. To prevent misapprehension, I