

son, without giving him three distinct warnings. Well, the honorable gentleman in question—I dare say he was honorable, and a member of some House,—he, like all the rest of us expected to outlive everybody. But in process of years he fell lame, then afterwards, he became deaf, and at last he grew blind: then Death's hour had come and in spite of some admirable pleading on behalf of the defendant in the case, he had his "three warnings" like a Parisian editor, his case was closed, his form was locked up, and his impression was struck off the face of the earth, and Death claimed and had his own. (Laughter.) Now, sir, we have had three warnings, and if we do not take heed of them and prepare for the possible future condition into which we may be plunged, woe to us if we are found unprepared when the hour of destiny strikes! (Cheers.) We have submitted a plan preparing us for such a contingency, and the Attorneys General East and West have analysed its constitutional character, while the Minister of Finance and the President of the Council have treated it in its financial aspects. There are some objections taken to the plan, I understand, but I do not believe that any member will get up in this House, and declare that he is an anti-unionist, that he is opposed to all union, and that he considers union unnecessary and inexpedient. (Hear, hear.) I do not know that there is one man out of the one hundred and thirty who compose this House, in view of the circumstances in which we are placed, who will declare that he is opposed to any sort of union with the Lower Provinces. One may say that he does not like this or the other clause—that he does not like this or that feature of the proposed scheme; but still all admit that union of some kind would increase our protection and be a source of strength. Some honorable gentlemen, while admitting that we have entered, within the present decade, on a period of political transition, have contended that we might have bridged the abyss with that Prussian pontoon, called a Zollverein. But if any one for a moment will remember that the trade of the whole front of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia gravitates at present along-shore to Portland and Boston, while the trade of Upper Canada, west of Kingston, has long gravitated across the lakes to New York, he will see, I think, that a mere Zollverein treaty without a strong political end to serve, and some political power at its back, would be, in our new

circumstances, merely waste paper. (Hear, hear.) The charge that we have not gone far enough—that we have not struck out boldly for a consolidated union, instead of a union with reserved local jurisdictions, is another charge which deserves some notice. To this I answer that, if we had had, as was proposed, an Intercolonial Railway twenty years ago, we might by this time have been, perhaps, and only perhaps, in a condition to unite into one consolidated Government; but certain politicians and capitalists having defeated that project twenty years ago, special interests took the place great general interests might by this time have occupied; vested rights and local ambitions arose and were recognized; and all those had to be admitted as existing in a pretty advanced stage of development, when our Conferences were called together. (Hear, hear.) The lesson to be learned from this squandering of quarter centuries by British Americans is this, that if we lose the present propitious opportunity, we may find it as hard a few years hence to get an audience, even for any kind of union (except American union) as we should have found it to get a hearing last year for a Legislative union, from the long period of estrangement and non-intercourse which had existed between these provinces, and the special interests which had grown up in the meantime in each of them. (Cheers.) Another motive to union, or rather a phase of the last motive spoken of, is this, that the policy of our neighbors to the south of us has always been aggressive. There has always been a desire amongst them for the acquisition of new territory, and the inexorable law of democratic existence seems to be its absorption. They coveted Florida, and seized it; they coveted Louisiana, and purchased it; they coveted Texas, and stole it; and then they picked a quarrel with Mexico, which ended by their getting California. (Hear, hear.) They sometimes pretend to despise these colonies as prizes beneath their ambition; but had we not had the strong arm of England over us, we should not now have had a separate existence. (Cheers.) The acquisition of Canada was the first ambition of the American Confederacy, and never ceased to be so, when her troops were a handful and her navy scarce a squadron. Is it likely to be stopped now, when she counts her guns afloat by thousands and her troops by hundreds of thousands? On this motive, a very powerful expression of opinion has