

tween the wisdom displayed on that point in the Constitution of the United States, and the lack of wisdom in the arrangement proposed for adoption here. There is, in the United States' system, a clear and distinct line drawn between the functions of the general and state governments. Some may not like the idea of state sovereignty, and many may wish that more power had been given to the General Government. But this much is plain, that it is not proposed to allow anything approaching to state sovereignty here. We have not even an intelligible statement as to what powers are to be exercised by the general, and what by the local legislatures and governments. Several subjects are specifically given to both; many others are confusedly left in doubt between them; and there is the strange and anomalous provision that not only can the General Government disallow the acts of the provincial legislatures, and control and hamper and fetter provincial action in more ways than one, but that wherever any federal legislation contravenes or in any way clashes with provincial legislation, as to any matter at all common between them, such federal legislation shall override it, and take its place. It is not too much to say that a continuance of such a system for any length of time without serious clashing is absolutely impossible. This is in effect so declared in the despatch of Her Majesty's Colonial Secretary, and it is clearly pointed out in the *London Times* and in the *Edinburgh Review*. It seems as if our statesmen had sought to multiply points of collision at every turn. Then as to the non provision of a permanent seat of government, and the arrangements contemplated for the judiciary, we find still more of the same sort of thing; and as to the extraordinary pains that seem to have been taken to throw up a great wall or hedge round those institutions of Lower Canada which of late have been giving us no trouble to speak of—as to the extraordinary pains, I say, that seem to have been taken to put a wall around those institutions, and to give every possible guarantee about them on this side and on that; why, this very machinery, provided for the mere purpose of inducing people to agree to the scheme, who would not otherwise countenance it, is calculated, at no very distant day, to cause the cry to resound throughout the land—"To your tents, O, Israel!" (Hear, hear.) I had reached this point of my argument, when I was compelled to throw myself on the indulgence of

the House. There is just one consideration connected with these matters to which I have been alluding, that I wish to revert to in few words, because I believe it escaped me, in part at least, last night. A marked difference between the history of the United States just before they framed their constitution, and our late history, is this: the adoption of the Constitution of the United States followed immediately upon their successful war of independence. The men who adopted it had just gone shoulder to shoulder through the severest trial that could have been given to their patience and other higher qualities. Their entire communities had been, you may say, united as one man, in the great struggle through which they had passed, and were then equally united in their hopes as to the grand results which their new system was to bring forth. They had tried the system of mere confederation, and were agreed that it was inadequate to meet the wants of their situation. They were all trying to remove the evils that they felt and apprehended from it, and to build up a great nationality that should endure in the future. That was the position they occupied. Ours is some thing very different indeed. We have not gone through an ordeal such as that through which they had so proudly passed. On the contrary, we have ended, temporarily ended at any rate, a series of struggles it is true, but struggles of a very different kind; struggles that have just pitted our public men one against another, and to some extent, I am sorry to say, even our faiths and races against each other. (Hear, hear.) For one, I do believe that these struggles—of the latter class I mean—were dying out, but for these contemplated changes, which are threatening to revive them. But, however that may be, struggles there have been amongst us, of which we have no cause to be proud; things have occurred since the union of which we ought to be ashamed, if we are not. (Hear, hear.) Of this kind are the only struggles that we have had; and when, from such a past and present, we are told to start with the idea, so to speak, of at once creating and developing the character of a new and united nation, under institutions giving us a something short of independence, and at the same time any quantity of matters about which to dispute and come to trouble, we may as well not shut our eyes to the fact, that we start with but poor omens