

evidence of ability of a very high order, and I am sure the country will regret that any of the gentlemen who so well adorned the Conference, and who occupied such honorable positions in the government of their provinces, should have lost those positions through attachment to the scheme, for I had learned to look up to those men with a great deal of interest and hope for the future. (Hear, hear.) They are men of such a superior order, that they would grace any legislature in which they might be called upon to take part, and I trust they may be soon again placed in the positions of power and trust from which they have been so unhappily ejected. (Hear, hear.) There are other reasons to which I might refer, that are pressing the subject upon our attention. I will first, however, briefly refer to one important point connected with the subject, about which a good deal has been said by those who have spoken against the resolutions, and it is a matter that will be made the utmost of among the electors of Upper Canada. I mean the question of referring the scheme to a vote of the people, at a general election or some other way, to ascertain what their views are upon it before taking final action in this House. Previous to the opening of the present session, I took occasion to visit several townships in the county I have the honor to represent. I laid the whole matter as fully before them as I could well do, and I did not meet with a single individual who did not recognize it as the duty of the present House of Parliament to carry the measure into effect as speedily as possible, so far as it was in the power of our Legislature and Government to do. At various meetings resolutions were voluntarily proposed by individuals in the audience, instructing me to support the measure, and further stating that they would consider it a calamity if a general election were resorted to for the mere purpose of obtaining the consent of the people on the subject, nine-tenths of whose press endorse it. So satisfied were my constituents of the fairness of the scheme on the whole, and of the importance of having it go into operation with the least delay possible, that I feel that I shall be sustained in the vote I am about to give, by the sentiment of those whom I represent in this House. For these reasons, then, I am prepared to vote for the proposed union of all the British American Provinces, as provided for in the resolutions now before

the House. (Hear, hear.) Mr. SPEAKER, I trust the House will not regard me as desirous of assuming the office of a censor, if I express my belief that many of the speeches that have been made upon this question have contained a vast quantity of matter quite irrelevant to the question under discussion. There may be parts of the arrangement proposed that are unsatisfactory to many hon. gentlemen, but it is utterly impossible to devise a scheme that will be acceptable to everybody, or that will not be open to the criticism of seeming to bear harder on one section of the country than on another. But it should not be judged in that manner, but by its general fairness and by its being calculated to promote the welfare of the entire country embraced and to be embraced in the Confederacy. It would be absurd to suppose that a scheme could be devised for the purpose that would please and satisfy every section. The scheme under consideration should not be treated and criticised in this narrow, contracted view. Some portions of the country may have to make concessions and sacrifices for the public good, but these should be cheerfully borne, if not of too aggravating a nature. If Upper Canada is blessed with more wealth than any of the other provinces, it ought not to be forgotten that its accountability and its responsibility are greater—that they are in proportion to its riches—and while the people of that important section of the Confederacy may be called upon to concede some things that they have valued very highly for the general welfare, yet it is not for a moment to be supposed—and no one who dispassionately examines the whole subject can come to that conclusion—that Upper Canada will not receive very important advantages in return, in other respects. There must be conciliation and compromise between the several conflicting interests found in so large and so varied a territory, and we never can have a union without meeting and accommodating ourselves to this difficulty. (Hear, hear.) The question of our defences is another important consideration in connection with the subject; but I am not going to discuss that, because I am not a military man. I cannot, however, see how any hon. gentleman can deliberately stand up and express as his candid conviction, that the proposed union will not in any manner increase our defensive power. To me, such statements seem most extraordinary. But this portion of the question has already