

patible with Imperial sovereignty—that it may probably result in not only severing our connection with the Mother Country, but in forcing us to a union with the neighbouring republic. That I have heard urged as the greatest and most important objection which strikes at the root of the proceedings of the Quebec Conference. I know that many of the opponents of the scheme entertain the apprehension—perhaps the conviction—that that will be the result. (Hear, hear.) Far from deprecating, then, the discussion of that question in its broadest aspect, I think all of us who desire to perpetuate our connection with England, should listen calmly and anxiously to the objections which are urged by those who conscientiously entertain those opinions which are not only blameless, but entitled to respect. (Hear, hear.) Now, I do not deny that the effect of the present movement may be to change the character of the actual relations which subsist between this province and the Mother Country.

HON. MR. HOLTON—Hear! hear!

HON. MR. ROSE— I do not deny that the result may be to change the character of these relations. But I maintain, and I hope I shall be able to satisfy the House of the soundness of the position I take, that the change will be of that character, that, instead of loosening or weakening or diminishing the connection with the Mother Country, it will tend to put it on a footing which will make it stronger and more enduring. (Hear, hear.) Though I believe these relations will be somewhat changed, and we may have to consider what new aspect they will present, I believe this measure is forced upon us by the necessities of our position. The irresistible force of passing events will not allow us to stand still. But, whether by this inevitable change the country shall gradually lose its dependent or protected character and assume more of the Federal relation, constituting this a territorial division of the Empire, I believe it will result in placing those relations on a surer and more steadfast footing, and that we will still acknowledge the same Sovereign, owe the same fealty, and maintain the same veneration for the English Constitution and name. (Hear, hear.) It cannot be denied that there is a state of public opinion growing up in England just now—not confined, as it was a few years ago, to a class of extreme theorists—that the connection which subsists between the colonies—Canada especially—and the Mother Country,

is a source of expense and danger. It cannot be denied that that kind of opinion has obtained a good deal more force within the last few years, than those of us who desire to maintain the connection between these colonies and England would like that it should have obtained; and we cannot ignore the consequences which that increasing volume of public opinion may have upon the legislation of England. Then there is another consideration which makes this subject stand out more prominently before the people of England at the present time than otherwise it would do, and that is, the state of its relations with the republic adjoining us, and the enormous military power which the United States have shewn, within the last two or three years, that they possess. In consequence of this, the state of opinion in England which might have been confined for many years perhaps to mere theory, has been brought to a head. It is not now merely a question of abstract opinion, whether under such and such circumstances it would be better for this and other colonies to assume a more independent attitude towards England. But it has been pressed with unexpected abruptness to a practical issue before the people of England, and they have now to consider what the relations of Great Britain to these colonies would be, in the event of war with the United States; how far, in that event, it would be possible to protect this remote dependency of the empire, to avoid disaster to the English flag, and at a distance of 8,000 miles to maintain the prowess of the English name. It is this which has forced public opinion so strongly in England to a consideration of the actual relations between this country and the Mother Country, and it is this state of facts with which we must deal now. It is, I repeat, past discussing as a more abstract matter of doctrine. We must look our situation in the face. We must consider the eventualities which press themselves on our notice, and it is our bounden duty to see whether we cannot find in the union of these colonies security to ourselves and a source of strength to the Empire at large. (Hear, hear.) With respect, then, to the objections urged by those who consider that this scheme may be leading us along a new and untrodden path towards independence, or at least to a more independent relation with reference to England than that in which we now stand towards her, I say we cannot forget that our