

Ministry in office which shall command more completely the confidence of the great mass of our people, and which shall possess the same or equal facilities for adjusting those sectional difficulties which have disturbed us so long; and I trust that in this most important crisis, this House will show itself not altogether unworthy to be intrusted with the destinies of three millions of their countrymen. My own years are not very many, Mr. SPEAKER, but yet even I can remember when Canada was but a petty province, an obscure dependency, scarce able to make its voice heard on the other side of the Atlantic without a rebellion; forgotten or ignored, as if, as the French Minister said when he signed the treaty for its surrender, "it mattered not what became of a few barren acres of snow!" And yet, sir, in less than thirty years I have lived to see Canada expand into a state equal in numbers, in resources and power of self-government to many an independent European kingdom—lacking only the will to step at once from the position of a dependency to that of an ally—a favored ally of the great country to which we belong, and to take that rank among the commonwealth of nations which is granted to those people, and to those only, who have proved that they possess the power as well as the wish to defend their liberties. This, sir, is what I think Canada can do; this is what I think Canada ought to do; and if, as I believe, this project of Confederation would contribute most powerfully to enable us to do so, there are few sacrifices which I would refuse to make for such an object—much more, forgive my honorable friends yonder for having in time past spoken somewhat over harshly and hastily of each other. Let them only persevere, let them only go on and complete the task which I will say they have so nobly begun, and they will have made good their claim—I do not say to the forgiveness—but to the regard, the affection, the esteem of every man who shall hereafter bear the name of Canadian. (Cheers.)

MR. HARWOOD said—MR. SPEAKER, the importance of the proposed measure; the fatal consequences which would result to the country if the plan of Confederation were rejected by this House; the sources of social, political and commercial prosperity with which the measure of Confederation is pregnant, if it is adopted with a firm determination on the part of all to contribute their part towards its perfect working, are such,

105

that notwithstanding the eloquent speeches delivered on the subject on both sides, and which seem to have completely exhausted it, I consider it my duty to make known to the country the reasons which influence me to assist in passing it. Called, as we all are, to record our votes either for or against this great constitutional change, it is no more than right that every one should in his own way account for the part which he may take in a measure which will naturally inaugurate a new era in the parliamentary annals of Canada. (Hear, hear.) I have listened attentively to the opponents of the measure, and read their speeches again and again, and truly the only effect they have had on my mind is a stronger conviction that in the anomalous position of the country, a Federal union of all the Provinces of British North America is the only remedy for all the innumerable difficulties which are shadowed forth on our political horizon. (Cheers.) The opponents of the measure, not being able positively to deny the advantages of Confederation to all the five provinces of British America, endeavor to get up a cry that this union would involve the loss to us French-Canadians, and Catholics, of our nationality, our language, our laws and institutions. I, for my part, cannot look upon it in so terrible a light—having all history before me, I cannot come to that conclusion. I shall soon shew clearly that there exists throughout the world confederations in which are included different nationalities, different religious sects, and in which, nevertheless, the most thorough equilibrium prevails of the political, civil and religious rights pertaining to the different classes of which they consist. Do we find any other means of settling our difficulties of all kinds besides this of Confederation? No, I find none; and none is proposed to us by the opponents of the plan now before the House! Mr. SPEAKER, the country is come to a political dead-lock; we have arrived at a crisis; ambition, the thirst of power, political passions worked upon in all ways and on all sides, have so clogged the wheels of the machine of government, that it has been brought to a stand-still; and those who guided its movements have had to rack their brains to find some way of continuing the transaction of public business—a way by which we may arrive at a solution of the difficulty, and escape from the slough of *status quo* in which the wheels of government are stuck fast, and by which we may return to the