

ed the Spanish with the fate of the Egyptian oppressor. It is a principle capable of inspiring a noble ambition and a most salutary emulation. You have sent your young men to guard your frontier. You want a principle to guard your young men, and thus truly defend your frontier. For what do good men (who make the best soldiers) fight? For a line of scripture or chalk line—for a pretext or for a principle? What is a better boundary between nations than a parallel of latitude, or even a natural obstacle?—what really keeps nations intact and apart?—a principle. When I can hear our young men say as proudly, “our Federation” or “our Country,” or “our Kingdom,” as the young men of other countries do, speaking of their own, then I shall have less apprehension for the result of whatever trials the future may have in store for us. (Cheers.) It has been said that the Federal Constitution of the United States has failed. I, sir, have never said it. The Attorney General West told you the other night that he did not consider it a failure; and I remember that in 1861, when in this House I remarked the same thing, the only man who then applauded the statement was the Attorney General West—so that it is pretty plain he did not simply borrow the argument for use the other night, when he was advocating a Federal union among ourselves. (Hear, hear.) It may be a failure for us, paradoxical as this may seem, and yet not a failure for them. They have had eighty years’ use of it, and having discovered its defects, may apply a remedy and go on with it eighty years longer. But we also are lookers on, who saw its defects as the machine worked, and who have prepared contrivances by which it can be improved and kept in more perfect order when applied to ourselves. And one of the foremost statesmen in England, distinguished alike in politics and literature, has declared, as the President of the Council informed us, that we have combined the best parts of the British and the American systems of government, and this opinion was deliberately formed at a distance, without prejudice, and expressed without interested motives of any description. (Hear, hear.) We have, in relation to the head of the Government, in relation to the judiciary, in relation to the second chamber of the Legislature, in relation to the financial responsibility of the General Government,

and in relation to the public officials whose tenure of office is during good behaviour, instead of at the caprice of a party—in all these respects we have adopted the British system; in other respects we have learned something from the American system, and I trust and believe we have made a very tolerable combination of both (Hear, hear.) The principle of Federation is a generous principle. It is a principle that gives men local duties to discharge, and invests them at the same time with general supervision, that excites a healthy sense of responsibility and comprehension. It is a principle that has produced a wise and true spirit of statesmanship in all countries in which it has ever been applied. It is a principle eminently favorable to liberty, because local affairs are left to be dealt with by local bodies and cannot be interfered with by those who have no local interest in them, while matters of a general character are left exclusively to a general government. It is a principle coincident with every government that ever gave extended and important services to a country, because all governments have been more or less confederations in their character. Spain was a federation, for although it had a king reigning over the whole country, it had its local governments for the administration of local affairs. The British Isles are a confederation, and the old French dukedoms were confederated in the States General. It is a principle that runs through all the history of civilization in one form or another, and exists alike in monarchies and democracies; and having adopted it as the principle of our future government, there were only the details to arrange and agree upon. Those details are before you. It is not in our power to alter any of them even if the House desires it. If the House desires it can reject the treaty, but we cannot, nor can the other provinces which took part in its negotiation, consent that it shall be altered in the slightest particular. (Hear, hear.) Mr. SPEAKER, I am sorry to have detained the House so long, and was not aware till I had been some time on my legs that my physical force was so inadequate to the exposition of these few points which, not specially noticed by my predecessors in this debate, I undertook to speak upon. We stand at present in this position: we are bound in honor, we are bound in good faith, to four provinces occupied by our fellow-colonists, to carry out