

of the North-West territory. There is not in this House one hon. member who appreciates more fully than I do the great natural resources and great future value of that territory; but I am not of that class of sanguine and visionary politicians who would risk losing all by grasping too much, and in the vast dominion extending from Lake Superior to the shores of Newfoundland, the Confederacy will have ample scope for the energy and enterprise of her people for a long time to come. The North-West territory, from its geographical position as regards us, is very difficult of access. A broad tract of barren and inhospitable country intervenes between Lake Superior and the fertile plains of the Red River and the Saskatchewan, which for seven months out of the twelve are, in fact, wholly inaccessible to us save through a foreign country, rendering it next to impossible for us alone to effect close connection with and colonization of that country. We cannot jump all at once from the position of colonists to that of colonizers. That great territory can only be developed, colonized and preserved to us by the exercise of that fostering care which the Empire has ever bestowed upon her colonies in their infancy. The Hon. President of the Council (Hon. Mr. BROWN), in the course of the debate, said he hoped to see the day when our young men would go forth from among us to settle the North-West territory. I harbor no such wish. On the contrary, one of the fondest hopes I cherish as a result of Confederation is, that it will so attract capital and enterprise to the provinces, so tend to develop our internal resources, as to offer to the youth of the country a field for the exercise of that laudable energy and ambition which now cause so many of them to leave their own hearths and cast their lot with strangers. One of the greatest ills that Canada now suffers from is, that the young men born and brought up in her midst look abroad for their future, and bestow their energies and talents on another land; and, although an immigrant myself, I know and admit that a man born and brought up here is worth any two immigrants for the arduous task of clearing and settling what remains to us of the public domain. I hope and trust that the Confederation of the Provinces will create sufficient inducements to keep the young men of the country at home. (Hear, hear.) It is in that hope that I support the measure. I trust at the same time that the great North-

West territory will be preserved to our flag, and that, fostered by the Mother Country, it will in time become great and populous, and finally extend the British American nation to the shores of the Pacific. It would be unfair, at this late stage of the debate, to enter further into details. I promised that I would not do so. With details, indeed, it has all along appeared to me we had little to do now. If the project as a whole be good, surely means will be found, as we go on, to remedy objectionable details. With all its defects—and I admit there are many defects—there never was a written Constitution but had its defects—I feel confident that the general design set forth in the resolutions meets with the approval of a large majority of the people of Canada at all events; and it would be an insult to the sound common sense of a people that have so long proved themselves capable of judging for themselves and of governing themselves, to suppose them incapable of adjusting, from time to time, as occasion arises, the minor details or defects of a system of government to which they have resolved on according a fair trial. (Hear, hear.) And now, Mr. SPEAKER, what I had to say on this important subject of Confederation I have said. I promised that I would not weary the House by entering into details; I trust that I have not done so; but I may be permitted to express a hope—a hope founded in a deep and abiding belief—that the people of these provinces are and will prove themselves equal to the great undertaking that is before them; that aided by all the commercial power of Britain in time of peace, by all her military and maritime power in war, should war unhappily come about, we will show to the world that we are not unworthy scions of the noble races of which we come, but that we are competent to successfully work out to a great end the task that is intrusted to us—the noblest and worthiest task that can be intrusted to an intelligent and enlightened people—that of making for themselves a name and a place among the nations of the earth; that of building up—to borrow a quotation aptly introduced into his able speech by my hon. friend from South Lanark—a quotation from the speech of a renowned British statesman, when speaking on a great colonial question—that of building up “one of those great monuments with which England marks the records of her deeds—not pyramids and obelisks, but states and commonwealths,