

one of two alternatives—a dissolution of the existing union between Upper and Lower Canada, or some larger scheme, such as that now contemplated by the people of these provinces. I should also have stated at some length my reasons, if we had to decide between these alternatives for opposing the former. I believe—and I think hon. gentlemen almost unanimously in this House agree with me—that the union existing between these provinces at the present time has, in all its important bearings, more than realized the most sanguine anticipations of those who were concerned in bringing it about. We have seen, since the union, an increase in the population, revenue and resources of these provinces seldom witnessed in the history of any country. We have seen two peoples entirely dissimilar in race, language and institutions—having nothing in common but their joint allegiance to the same Crown—we have seen those two peoples rapidly becoming one people—one in name, one in object, one in feeling. And I believe that in every respect the union under which we now live has been most happy in its results. If I had gone, therefore, into the subject, as I originally intended, I should have stated fully my views upon it in all its bearings. And I should have stated, as I now state, that if I had had to give my vote whether the connection between these two provinces should remain, or whether it should be dissolved, and we should go back to the state of separate existence in which we were before the union, I should have been found for one most hostile to a dissolution of that union. (Hear, hear.) But circumstances, over some of which this House has not control, while others are within our control, have led to a probable termination of this debate at an earlier period than I had anticipated, and I will not trespass on the patience of the House, at this late hour, by detaining honorable members with any lengthened remarks. In the few observations I shall offer, I will confine myself to a reference to some of the leading features of the scheme now before us. I shall not, as many honorable gentlemen have done, go into lengthy quotations of other men's opinions, or comment on the effect of different systems of government in other countries. I will confine myself to what I consider, from the best means of information I can obtain, the probable effect and bearing of this proposed scheme upon ourselves. (Hear, hear.) I agree with

many honorable gentlemen who have preceded me, when I say that since I first gave attention to public matters, I have looked forward to the time when a more intimate connection between these British American Provinces would not only be desirable, but would become absolutely necessary. I look upon it as desirable in a military point of view, and in a commercial point of view. It must be evident to any honorable gentleman who has occupied a seat in this House—even for the short period that I have had the honor of a seat here—that the opinion of the House of late years has very materially changed with reference to the defences of the country. I am satisfied that we have, irrespective of party, become more alive to our duty in that respect; and that the people of this country, acting through those who sit here as their representatives, are prepared to take upon themselves their just share of responsibility for the defence of these provinces. (Hear, hear.) And I look upon this scheme of union as a most important step in that view; because while we rely, as we do rely to a great extent, on the assistance of the home Government for the defence of this country, it must be evident to all of us that these provinces, acting in concert with each other, and all acting in concert with the home Government, can organize a more effective system of defence than we could do if we remained separate and isolated. (Hear, hear.) I believe this question should be considered chiefly from a commercial point of view. We must necessarily consider the question in connection with the more intimate commercial intercourse which it is contemplated will result from the construction of the Intercolonial Railway. A new market for our commodities will be opened up by the removal of the barriers to trade which now exist between us. Believing, as I do, that our commercial relations with our sister provinces should be free and unrestricted, I am heartily in favor of the construction of this railway. After stating that upon these general principles I am in favor of the union of these provinces, I may also state that had I my choice, and were my vote to decide the question, I would say “give us a legislative union,” because I believe it would have, for its effect, the bringing of all the colonists more immediately into contact and connection with each other, rendering our interests much more identical than by the Federal plan. But I infer, from the speeches made on the floor of this House at the opening of