

mit that it is reasonable and just to insert a provision in the scheme that will put it out of the power of any party to act unjustly. If the power that the central authority is to have—of vetoing the doings of the Local Legislature—is used, it will be ample, I think, to prevent anything of that kind. But the veto itself is objected to. It is objected that the elected Legislature will be rendered powerless by the influence of the appointed Upper House exercised over them. Well, sir, under the British Constitution, in all British colonies, and in Great Britain itself, there is a certain elasticity to be presumed. Everything is not provided for, because a great deal is trusted to the common sense of the people. I think it is quite fair and safe to assert that there is not the slightest danger that the Federal Parliament will perpetrate any injustice upon the local legislatures, because it would cause such a reaction as to compass the destruction of the power thus unjustly exercised. The veto power is necessary in order that the General Government may have a control over the proceedings of the local legislatures to a certain extent. The want of this power was the great source of weakness in the United States, and it is a want that will be remedied by an amendment in their Constitution very soon. So long as each state considered itself sovereign, whose acts and laws could not be called in question, it was quite clear that the central authority was destitute of power to compel obedience to general laws. If each province were able to enact such laws as it pleased, everybody would be at the mercy of the local legislatures, and the General Legislature would become of little importance. It is contended that the power of the General Legislature should be held in check by a veto power with reference to its own territory, resident in the local legislatures, respecting the application of general laws to their jurisdiction. All power, they say, comes from the people and ascends through them to their representatives, and through the representatives to the Crown. But it would never do to set the Local above the General Government. The Central Parliament and Government must, of necessity, exercise the supreme power, and the local governments will have the exercise of power corresponding to the duties they have to perform. The system is a new and untried one, and may not work so harmoniously as we now anticipate, but there will always be power in the British Parliament and our own to remedy any defects that may be discovered after

the system is in operation.. Altogether, I regard the scheme as a magnificent one, and I look forward to the future with anticipations of seeing a country and a government possessing great power and respectability, and of being, before I die, a citizen of an immense empire built up on our part of the North American continent, where the folds of the British flag will float in triumph over a people possessing freedom, happiness and prosperity equal to the people of any other nation on the earth. If there is anything that I have always felt anxious about in this country, it is to have the British possessions put in such a position that we could safely repose, without fear of danger from any quarter, under the banner which we believe after all covers the greatest amount of personal freedom and the greatest amount of personal happiness that is to be found in the world. (Hear, hear.) And when we look to the vast territory we have in the North-West; when we know that the great rivers which flow through that territory, flow through immense beds of coal, and that the whole country is rich in mineral deposits of all kinds—petroleum, copper, gold and iron; that the land is teeming with resources of wealth calculated to build up an extensive and valuable commerce, and support a powerful nation; that all this we can touch and seize upon the moment we are prepared to open up a way to reach them and allow the settler to enter; when we remember this, I say, I think we can look forward with hope to a prodigious increase in our population and an immense development of strength and power. (Hear, hear.) So far our people have had to contend with the usual difficulties common to the people of all new countries like ours; but now Canada is beginning to assume a position of commercial importance, and in proportion as that importance increases we will be able to devote ourselves to the opening up and settlement of the interior, and to the development of a new nationality—to use the term that has been so sharply criticised—in that vast western country where there is hardly a white man living to-day. (Hear, hear.) I do not propose, sir, to follow the example that has been set of speaking four or five hours upon this subject. I proposed at the beginning briefly to give my own views in reference to the Confederation of these provinces, and then to leave the ground to other honorable gentlemen. I am exceedingly desirous of seeing the debate proceed as rapidly as possible; and believing it will be necessary for us to