

subject, however, though looked upon with favor by the country, and though there were no distinct expressions of opposition to it from any party, did not begin to assume its present proportions until last session. Then, men of all parties and all shades of politics became alarmed at the aspect of affairs. They found that such was the opposition between the two sections of the province, such was the danger of impending anarchy, in consequence of the irreconcilable differences of opinion, with respect to representation by population, between Upper and Lower Canada, that unless some solution of the difficulty was arrived at, we would suffer under a succession of weak governments,—weak in numerical support, weak in force, and weak in power of doing good. All were alarmed at this state of affairs. We had election after election,—we had ministry after ministry,—with the same result. Parties were so equally balanced, that the vote of one member might decide the fate of the Administration, and the course of legislation for a year or a series of years. This condition of things was well calculated to arouse the earnest consideration of every lover of his country, and I am happy to say it had that effect. None were more impressed by this momentous state of affairs, and the grave apprehensions that existed of a state of anarchy destroying our credit, destroying our prosperity, destroying our progress, than were the members of this present House; and the leading statesmen on both sides seemed to have come to the common conclusion, that some step must be taken to relieve the country from the dead-lock and impending anarchy that hung over us. — With that view, my colleague, the President of the Council, made a motion founded on the despatch addressed to the Colonial Minister, to which I have referred, and a committee was struck, composed of gentlemen of both sides of the House, of all shades of political opinion, without any reference to whether they were supporters of the Administration of the day or belonged to the Opposition, for the purpose of taking into calm and full deliberation the evils which threatened the future of Canada. That motion of my honorable friend resulted most happily. The committee, by a wise provision,—and in order that each member of the committee might have an opportunity of expressing his opinions without being in any way compromised before the public, or with his party, in

regard either to his political friends or to his political foes,—agreed that the discussion should be freely entered upon without reference to the political antecedents of any of them, and that they should sit with closed doors, so that they might be able to approach the subject frankly and in a spirit of compromise. The committee included most of the leading members of the House.—I had the honor myself to be one of the number,—and the result was that there was found an ardent desire—a creditable desire, I must say,—displayed by all the members of the committee to approach the subject honestly, and to attempt to work out some solution which might relieve Canada from the evils under which she labored. The report of that committee was laid before the House, and then came the political action of the leading men of the two parties in this House, which ended in the formation of the present Government. The principle upon which that Government was formed has been announced, and is known to all. It was formed for the very purpose of carrying out the object which has now received to a certain degree its completion, by the resolutions I have had the honor to place in your hands. As has been stated, it was not without a great deal of difficulty and reluctance that that Government was formed. The gentlemen who compose this Government had for many years been engaged in political hostilities to such an extent that it affected even their social relations. But the crisis was great, the danger was imminent, and the gentlemen who now form the present Administration found it to be their duty to lay aside all personal feelings, to sacrifice in some degree their position, and even to run the risk of having their motives impugned, for the sake of arriving at some conclusion that would be satisfactory to the country in general. The present resolutions were the result. And, as I said before, I am proud to believe that the country has sanctioned, as I trust that the representatives of the people in this House will sanction, the scheme which is now submitted for the future government of British North America. (Cheers.) Everything seemed to favor the project, and everything seemed to shew that the present was the time, if ever, when this great union between all Her Majesty's subjects dwelling in British North America, should be carried out. (Hear, hear.) When the Government was formed, it was felt that the difficulties in the way of effecting a union between all the British North Amer-