

try divided into two parts—with Mexico a strong power in the South, and ourselves in the North, and two great European powers interested in preserving the balance of power on this continent we might have held our own. But that opportunity was lost. He thought that with the question of defence and other important questions the Ministry had to consider, there was quite enough to occupy their time during this and the next session. He would not occupy the time of the House longer. He had not expected to speak on this subject till to-morrow. Before the debate closed, he might give expression to his views in the shape of a series of resolutions which he would lay before the House. He did not expect his advice would be taken, but he would advise the Government to let the views of Parliament on this subject go before the people; let it remain over till after the recess, and when they came back in Spring they would be in a better position to act wisely and justly with the question. (Cheers).

Mr. Gray said if any doubt had rested on any gentleman's mind as to the propriety of passing these resolutions, he thought that doubt must have been removed by the speech of the member for Hants. That honourable gentleman had admitted the fertility and value of this territory. He had pointed out in most powerful language that the Hudson's Bay Company had sat as an incubus and curse on the country, and he had declared that England would not expend a farthing to maintain our rights. If that was the case, could we in fairness leave our fellow countrymen in the Red River settlement and in the Saskatchewan Valley, to remain under the curse of Hudson Bay rule, without laws, without the enjoyment of liberty, and not do what was in our power to extend to them the blessings we enjoyed ourselves? He (Mr. Gray) was prepared to say that we had no right to call on the British Government to undertake the settlement and development of the North-West. The British Government had performed that duty towards us in these colonies, and when under its fostering care we had reached the important position we now filled. We ought to say that the British Government should not be called on to incur one shilling of expense on account of British America, except in case of extreme emergency, in the case of war or imminent peril. We had no reason to anticipate any trouble of this kind at present. He thought injustice was done to the intelligence and morality of the leading men of the United States, when it was assumed that they were eternally desir-

[Mr. Howe (Hants)]

ing to grasp this country, and include it within their own domain. On our part, our mission at this moment was a mission of peace and not of hostility to the United States, and in building up this new nationality, we should pursue the course which had been so successfully pursued by the people of this country during the last forty years. They had gone on extending their settlements, mapping out territory after territory, and giving the people, originally few in number, who settled in these territories, the benefit of their laws, and the aid derived from their power. We could not follow a better example with regard to our own fertile territories in the West. And in doing this, it would not be without prospect of ulterior benefit to ourselves, not only to this portion of the country, but to the people on the seaboard. What had built up the great prosperity of the cities on the seaboard of the United States but the opening up of the trade of the West, and the providing of artificial channels to bring it to the sea. Mr. Gray went on to refer to the policy of England in recent years in sweeping away monopolies which had cramped the energies of the people, and contended that a similar course should be pursued with reference to the Hudson Bay monopoly. He alluded to the very serious doubts which existed as to the legal right of the Hudson's Bay Company to the territory it occupied, and pressed the opinion that its right should be decided by a judicial decision, in preference to the question being settled by a compromise. If the Company had no rights the territory would revert to the British Crown, which was willing to give it to us, and it would not cost us a farthing. If according to British law and justice, the Hudson's Bay Company had a legal right and interest in that territory, we should be willing to pay what was the value of that right, for he did not think any man in this country would wish to take away the Company's rights to the extent of a solitary shilling beyond what the law gave. Mr. Gray went on to contend that the opening up of the North-West was as much a part of the Scheme of Confederation agreed to by the various Provinces as was the Intercolonial Railway. He thought the resolutions should commend themselves to every member of the House. When the Government asked a sum of money to carry them out it would then be time to consider whether that sum was excessive or not. He thought we should not lose the opportunity which now presented itself of acquiring these great territories, and that it would be very unwise by delaying the matter till another session, to