

either of the Colonial statesmen now in this country on a special mission from New Zealand, had been authenticated from the commencement, and before the Secretary for the Colonies had committed himself to a particular course, that course would have been modified and the heartburnings and alienation of feeling, which all must deplore, would have been avoided. It had been objected that the policy which he now advocated would tend to relax instead of drawing closer the bond of union. He would reply that the bond of union between the parent State and the now adult Colonies was not strengthened but strained by an unduly close association perpetuating the condition appropriate to nonage, and the conviction forced upon him by a long and varied experience in Colonial affairs was, that the alternative lay between ultimate separation and the recognition of those Colonies on the same footing as foreign States in alliance so far as regards this matter of diplomatic relations.

He believed he had made out a sufficient case for inquiry. He had occupied the attention of the House at too great length. Conscience as he was of inability to do justice to so great a subject, he must thankfully acknowledge the kind attention with which the House had favoured him. Loyalty and patriotism were potent spirits, had worked wonders in times past, and might again; but they were spirits intangible, incorporeal—once evaporated they could never again lay hold of them. They were lost for ever. This consideration should temper and guide not only our dealings, but our tone of communication with our great self-maintaining and self-governing Colonies.

A great opportunity now presented itself for consolidating, on an even and permanent basis, the union of their great Colonial Empire—an opportunity which, if allowed to pass away, might never return, for uniting those great self-governing communities with the parent State by the bond of a common allegiance, affording to each the advantages of common citizenship, and to both the strength of union in a great Empire.