

APPENDIX V

impossible that the state of things which has existed in Canada should continue—that there must be a change—and he conceived that what was proposed by this measure was a most desirable change. He said we had but one of two alternatives—a dissolution of the Union, or the adoption of the Federal principle—and that for his part he considered a dissolution of the Union was the last thing to be adopted, and that the Federal system is the best remedy that can be applied under our particular circumstances. . . . Yet, after having passed this high eulogium on the measure, what does he say? Why, that he won't have it now—that he won't have it until it has been sent to the country, and the opinion of the electors has been obtained upon it! He says there is danger of annexation to the United States if these difficulties are not met, that annexation is hanging over us, that this measure will deliver us from that dire fate, and yet he is not prepared to apply the remedy now! And what are the reasons of the hon. gentleman for refusing to give effect to a measure of which he professes to be so enamoured? Does he, like the hon. member for North Ontario, deny the power of Parliament to pass such a measure? Not at all; he admits we have full power to pass it. Does he personally entertain any doubt as to the benefit from passing it now? On the contrary, he is enthusiastically for the measure, and declares that he would vote for it, just as it stands, as an elector at the polls. Does he want delay? On the contrary, he demands that the measure shall be urged on with all speed. (Hear, hear.) He says the sooner the members of the Government are in England the better for the people of Canada, that this question of federation, and the question of defence, and the question of American Reciprocity, should be urged on the British Government without one hour's unnecessary delay. He protests that on the fate of this measure some of the most vital interests of the Province depend, and yet he will not have it until months of valuable time have been lost, until the country has been forced to pass through all the turmoil and confusion and uncertainty of a general election, and until a new Parliament has been summoned and given its sanction to the measure. . . . But does the hon. gentleman pretend there is any doubt as to the feeling of the people of Canada on this measure? Not at all. On the contrary, he is quite confident that if submitted to the people there would be a vast majority in its favour—a complete sweep over the country. Nay, strange enough, he gives this very fact of the certainty of approval as the chief argument in favour of an election. He says: "Send it to the people; there is no fear of the result. The very men who now sit here to-day, or others who think as they do, will come back and adopt it!" Could anything