

## THE SENATE

Monday, November 11, 1867

The Speaker took the Chair at 3 o'clock.

After routine,

The order of the day for the consideration of His Excellency's Speech having been called

**Hon. Mr. Allan** rose to move the answer to the Speech, and said: In rising to address you to-day, I cannot altogether claim your indulgence upon the same grounds upon which an appeal is not unfrequently made to the consideration of the House on similar occasions, that of youth and inexperience, having already as it were served my parliamentary apprenticeship, though but a short one, in one former Legislative Council—but I am nevertheless but too conscious of my shortcomings and deficiencies as a speaker, not to feel how much I need your kind consideration upon the present occasion. Indeed, I might, perhaps, have done wisely had I at once declined in favour of other and abler members of this House, the task of moving the address in answer to the speech from the Throne, but I will frankly confess that I could not resist the opportunity thus offered to me of identifying myself with the first step in the parliamentary proceedings of the new era, which is now, I trust, opening so auspiciously upon our common country. Trusting, then honourable gentlemen to your indulgence, I shall proceed to make a few brief remarks on the different points alluded to in the address. I am sure, honourable gentlemen, that we all heartily participate in the deep feelings of gratification expressed by His Excellency the Governor-General in the consummation of the great work of Confederation, first commenced, carried on step by step, and now so happily completed under His Excellency's able and popular administration, and we rejoice that His Excellency has had the gratification of presiding over the first opening of the Parliament of the New Dominion. In stating further that we thankfully receive His Excellency's congratulations on the legislative sanction which has been given by the Imperial Parliament to the Act of Union, we feel that it is not boastful spirit that we are invited to join in the aspiration that under this Act of Union we may be laying the foundation of a new nationality, which shall extend its bounds from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. I repeat, honourable gentlemen, that it is no idle spirit of boasting that we give expression

to such utterances within this Senate Chamber. Folly and worse than folly would it be to affect for one moment to ignore the tremendous power of the great Republic which lies along our borders, but we should be unworthy of the great races from which we are sprung and of the mighty empire to which we belong, if we allowed the craven fear to intrude, that loyally fulfilling our obligations as friends and neighbours, we had aught to dread which should lead us to forego for one moment our determination to preserve our own distinct national independence! I am persuaded that the spirit which actuates the great body of the people of these Confederate Provinces is one of quiet, manly determination that we will, God helping us, preserve British America for British Americans, and I believe that one great step towards accomplishing this, which should be the great object of every true patriot, is to endeavour to draw together by the closest bonds into one great Confederation, all who on this continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific now acknowledge the sway of the same sovereign. In carrying out this great work of Confederation, honourable gentlemen, we have the satisfaction of hearing that we have both the moral and material support of the great Empire to which we belong. In the paragraph of His Excellency's speech to which the next resolution refers, His Excellency states that Her Majesty's Ministers considered the principle of Union as one of great and Imperial interests—not as has been hastily and ungenerously asserted by some few disappointed politicians in order that the mother country might then rid herself of all further responsibilities, and shift the whole burden of the defence of the Confederation upon the people of these Provinces, but because Her Majesty's Government were persuaded that in such a Union lay the elements of that strength, which if properly exerted would enable us to bear our fair share in the defence of our own soil, backed as we should be, if occasion unhappily required it, by the whole strength of the Empire. That we shall thus be supported we have had the fullest and most explicit assurances given to us on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and no better pledge could have been given for the fulfilment of these assurances than the promptitude with which the very flower of the British army has been from time to time despatched to this country, when the peace and safety of these colonies were likely to be endangered by foreign foes. All that is required of us honourable gentlemen is to be true to ourselves, cheerful to do our