

ed with disfavour on those particular parts, and on the arrangement which had been come to. But, hon. gentlemen, it appears to me that had they risen to the exigency of the moment; had they been in any way capable of appreciating the importance of the matter, and of taking hold of it in a straightforward, honest, and statesmanlike way, that then none of the disgraceful and much to be deplored complications which have arisen between British Columbia and the rest of the Dominion would now have stood in the way of the cordial relations which we should wish to see in existence between the whole of the different Provinces of the Dominion. I may as well now revert for a few moments to the consideration of the circumstances by which British Columbia was brought into Confederation with the other Provinces. I can safely say that it was through no spontaneous or innate wish of her own. The matter was at first initiated, talked of, and promulgated by a few native born and loyal Canadians who had made British Columbia their home, but with very little effect, for the space of two or three years, till at last the matter of the Confederation of the North American Colonies having become one of Imperial policy, a Governor was sent out from England to British Columbia, instructed to do all in his power to bring about what appeared a desirable end. His Excellency exercised his power and made use of the means that lay within his reach, and Confederation was speedily effected on the terms which we all know. In British Columbia, however, while the necessary negotiations and preliminaries were being carried on there were not a few persons who, professing to be well acquainted with Canada and Canadian characteristics, did not scruple to assert, and to warn British Columbians that Canada could not be trusted to carry out her engagements; but, hon. gentlemen, at that time British Columbia was a Crown colony, inhabited principally by Englishmen, men who, honest and straightforward themselves, and accustomed to honesty in grave matters of state in their native land, could not bring themselves to believe that Canadians, of originally the same birth and instincts as themselves, the present inhabitants of a country which was beginning to hold up her head among the nations of the world, to boast of her 4,000,000 of inhabitants, of her natural wealth and resources, and of greatly increasing prosperity, could, under any cir-

cumstances, fall so low in their own estimation, and be so utterly regardless of what was right and just, as to dream for one moment of cancelling or breaking the arrangements which might be made with British Columbia. The prophetic warnings thus given have, however, to my regret, and I believe to the regret of the majority of this House, turned out only too true, and British Columbia has not only been for the present deprived of the only advantages she could naturally expect to reap from Confederation, but she has, through no fault of her own, fallen somewhat into disrepute, and is more or less looked upon as a nuisance and an incumbrance. The reason for all this is the more deplorable, and I will add the more contemptible, when one plainly sees that it is brought about altogether by the working of party motives. The late Government, a Government which I am proud to say was a Government fit to be at the head of affairs of a country prospering as Canada was under its rule, brought before Parliament a bill admirably suited to bring about the end which they sought, i. e. the building of the Pacific Railway. It is now a matter of history how that scheme, eminently practical as it was, and eminently suited to the character of the work sought to be carried out, was frustrated through the weight of disgraceful party opposition which was brought to bear against it, and how the Government itself was brought low on matters connected with it. Suffice it to say that to me the course pursued by the party now in power at that time was the most glaring example of the prostitution of national expediency for the sake of place that it was ever my lot to know. It was a disgrace, hon. gentlemen, not only to themselves, but a disgrace to the whole country, and a disgrace which it will take many years to live down. The matter would not, however, have been so disastrous in its consequences had the present Government been equal to the task of replacing the old one and carrying on the works to which the country was pledged. Had they shown the slightest inclination to, or aptitude for, or even a due conception of the importance of the work that lay before them we should not perhaps now have so much reason to complain; but their conduct from the first has been so weak, so vacillating and inconsistent that every one has lost all belief in their sincerity and all confidence in their operations. How can people for instance, reconcile their expressions of good inten-