

when the Hon. Member for District No. 2, introduced a series of Resolutions setting forth terms on which this Colony should be united with Canada, the sense of the House, as then expressed, was that we were not possessed of sufficient information to enable us to come to any practical resolution on the subject; and, Sir, when the terms and conditions then proposed for the consideration of the House are compared with those now submitted for your adoption, no words are needed to show that the conclusion then arrived at was judicious.

Last year, again, the subject was introduced by the Hon. Dr. Davie, to a reluctant House. We all felt that there were circumstances which rendered its discussion then in this Council inexpedient, although the question of Confederation was even then occupying public attention to an absorbing extent, and had in fact been the test question at the elections a short time previously in the Districts in this part of the Colony. But certain remarks of the Hon. Member for Carleton, in reference to the position of Government Members on this question, compelled the expression of the views of the Council on the subject at that time, in a Resolution pointing out the practical impossibility of the Union of this Colony with Canada, until the North-West Territory was amalgamated with the Dominion.

But now circumstances are entirely changed. The Hudson Bay Company's rights in that region, known as the North-West Territory, are determined by purchase, and that country is practically part of the Dominion of Canada, for the temporary opposition from a certain class of the population of the Red River Settlement, to the assumption of the Government by the Canadian authorities is passing away, and by the present moment virtually at an end; and creating that exhalation of feeling resulting from an apprehension of the real intention of the Dominion Government as passed away, I regard it as an established fact that, as stated in Lord Granville's Despatch, our boundaries are now continuous with those of Canada.

But not only is Union with Canada now practicable, but, Sir, I regard the present as a most opportune moment for its consummation. I entirely agree with Hon. Members who say that this Colony requires a change. In its present depressed state, the Colony needs assistance and fresh impetus. There are many causes which combine to contribute to the depression now observable in the country. It has been attributed to the present form of Government. Take that as one cause if you please; but, Sir, I believe it has had very little effect, if any, in producing this result, and you will find many other and mightier reasons to account for it. Chiefly, I believe with the Hon. Attorney General, that the depression is attributable to the isolated position of the Colony, and to the cold shade thrown over us by the neighborhood of the Territories of the United States, from whom we can never hope for aid in advancing the interests of this Colony whilst under the British Flag. The desire for some change is urgent, and it we wait for more prosperous times, we may realize the old proverb of "Horse starving whilst the grass is growing." Besides, Sir, on reference to the terms now proposed for the consideration of this House by the Government, it will be found that they are based not altogether on the present condition of the Colony, but somewhat on an anticipated increase of population and prosperity; and I suppose we might wait many years before such a measure of prosperity would accrue to us, as to entitle us to ask better financial terms than are included in these Resolutions.

I believe the time, Sir, is opportune, and I think that there is every reason to suppose that the present Government of the Dominion is now desirous and ready to grant us fair and liberal terms. I believe, Sir, the Canadian Government are favourably disposed towards us, and prepared to go to the utmost of their ability in all reasonable matters to enable us to join the Confederation. The policy and wishes of the Imperial Government too in the same direction are clearly enunciated in Earl Granville's despatch; and we are fortunate in having now at the head of the Executive a Governor admirably adapted by his ability and experience to take charge, on our behalf, of negotiations for our union with the Dominion, and to whom the interests of the community may confidently be entrusted.

And that brings me, Sir, to this point. That in its

first introduction into this Council, this measure must necessarily be a Government measure. The constitution of this House renders it imperative that the initiatory steps should be taken by the Government, although the final acceptance of the terms will properly rest with the people. The policy of the Imperial Government has been clearly stated; it encourages us to amalgamate our interests with Canada, and points out the advantages to be thus obtained, and nothing that I could add would enumerate more clearly than that document the grounds on which Her Majesty's Government, on behalf of this Colony, favour Confederation.

This leads me to remark on the part that has been taken in reference to this question by the Official Members of this House, especially by the Executive Officers. Our position has been misapprehended, or if not misapprehended, it has been misrepresented, and I feel it my duty to allude to the false impressions which have been spread abroad on this subject. It has been stated that the Official Members have been obstructive to Confederation, with regard to their own official positions and interests. But this is not the fact. On a matter so clearly involving a question of Imperial policy, we were not at liberty to anticipate the views of the Home Government, which have now for the first time been distinctly made public. The Hon. Attorney General and myself have consistently affirmed the principle of Confederation, and we have always felt that we could safely combine our personal interests to the cure of the Imperial Government, whose servants we are. To Her Majesty's Government those interests are entrusted by the Resolutions proposed for your adoption; and, Sir, we are well satisfied that this question as it now personally should so depend. We have been right, Sir, I believe in not anticipating the views of the Imperial Government, for the terms of union now submitted for your adoption prove the wisdom of the course which we have pursued; and in the exercise of caution we have shown ourselves the truest friends of the Colony, even though we have not appeared to be the most enthusiastic advocates of Confederation.

This, then, is a Government measure, as the Honourable the senior Member for Victoria City has told you, and as I hold it is of necessity a Government measure. This scheme is propounded by the Government, as the guardians of the interests of this infant Colony, and I stand here as a member of the Government to support the Resolutions which are now before you; and I sincerely trust that they will be adopted by this Council. But His Excellency has told us that the ultimate acceptance or rejection of the terms of union with Canada, after they have been submitted to the Dominion Government, shall be left to the popular voice of this Colony.

I will now, Sir, come to the consideration of what Confederation is to the abstract, as I understand it. It is the union and consolidation of British interests in British Territory on this Continent, for the security and advancement of each Province individually, and of the whole collectively, under the continued support of the British Flag. A great idea of great minds, which have thus given a practical refutation to that doctrine of "America for the United States" known as the "Monro doctrine," held by leading politicians of the States south of us; and on this account, if on no other grounds, the principle of Confederation deserves the support of every British heart in the Colony.

I do not bring to a subject which I should not have known how to approach, but for the bridge thrown over for me by the Hon. Member for Victoria yesterday. By that Hon. Member the suggestion of a closer union with another country—with the United States in fact—and the possibility that at the next General Election such an union might be presented as an alternative to Confederation with Canada, was introduced in so palpable a manner, that I should feel myself derelict to my duty as a Member of the Executive and as a Member of this Council if I did not refer to it.

Mr. President, I should do violence to my best feelings were I to refrain from availing myself of this opportunity of paying my humble tribute of respect and esteem to the people of that great Republic. "Hear, hear," from all sides. No one can better appreciate than I do the high and eminent qualities which characterize that great Nation, and especially that national feeling—that love of country, so worthy of our imitation—for which they have made such sacrifices. It has been my fortune to pass several years in the United States, and to have formed there