

connected with all the glories of our past history, let its folds glitter before the eyes of mankind as the sign of hope and universal freedom.

I have thus expressed a few of my thoughts on this important subject now under consideration, and if the time has come when all independence of public opinion must be sacrificed at the shrine of power, when the people will sustain no man who dares to be candid, then, sir, I desire to have no participation in the administration of public affairs. I can be much happier and much more profitably employed in giving my attention to humbler duties. The right for the people to decide this question for themselves, is one of those great political rights of which no one should desire to deprive them; and I cannot consent, for one single moment, to abandon any part of their claims. I hope there is yet independent spirit in this house, that we shall not be guilty of so great an outrage as that proposed. Those who concur in passing Confederation at the present time will take upon themselves an awful responsibility; a responsibility for which their constituents will call them to a strict account. This resolution may pass, but if it does, those who vote for it will lose the confidence, and the judgment and good sense of a very large majority of the people. I see that party training is going on; prospective spirit is rising; every appeal that can be made to human passions is urged, and names not of the most pleasing kind are freely bestowed upon those who have the firmness to oppose a change in the constitution. Sir, names can never effect principles or change position. Ingenuity may coin them, and effrontery apply them, but the actual relations of life remain the same,—therefore let us be faithful to our great trust.—From the battlefields of all the earth upon which liberty has set up her standard, there comes to us the cry "be faithful," from the crumbled senate halls of nations for ever passed away, there comes to us an imploring appeal to be faithful to those who put their confidence in us. But, if Confederation must pass by a majority in the House, without the consent of a majority of the people of this country, then I say to my constituents, and also to the country at large, "thou canst not say I did it."

SPEECH OF MR. COFFIN.

Mr. COFFIN.—I regret that I am obliged to address the House at this late hour of the night; but as we are denied the privilege of another day's debate, and as the death-knell of my country is sounding, I do not wish to give a silent vote. The subject before the House is one of too great magnitude to be passed over lightly; it is a question of greater magnitude than any that has hitherto been before the Legislature. It is one calculated to sweep away our constitution, the dearest rights of Nova-Scotians as free men; it is one, sir, calculated to raise the ire of every one of Nova Scotia's sons; it is one that cannot be passed without ignoring the rights of the electors of Nova Scotia. Sir, I regret exceedingly that a resolution was passed in this House in 1864, authorizing a delegation to consult as to the propriety of a union of the Maritime Provinces, for out of that has grown the delegation to Quebec, and there with closed doors a consultation was held which ended in bartering away this fine Province, the people, and the constitution, to Canadian rule. There we have been sold, there we have been valued, there the rights dear to us of governing ourselves, and of being in ourselves a free, independent and contented people, were given up; and when it is known through the length and breadth of the land that this resolution has been passed, then it is that the indignation of the people will be aroused to an extent perhaps that will be calculated to weaken the strong feelings of attachment to their rulers that had hitherto existed. If this question had been approached in a way that was fair and honorable by first submitting the whole question to the country at the polls, and if it were then passed by the Legislature there would not have been the cause of complaint which at present exists. This is indeed a most dangerous step which is about to be taken; we have a thinking and intelligent people in Nova Scotia—a people that will not be likely to tolerate having their constitution bargained away without their consent, and without having those privileges which responsible government was intended to secure to them. I do not believe that the Imperial Parliament will ratify this scheme, if they are made properly acquainted with the whole transaction and with the facts which bear upon the case. Loyalty to the Crown has been spoken of. Sir, we pretend to foster that feeling, whilst at the same time a few men who now govern the country—who are expected to govern the people according to their well understood wishes, and who obtained place and power at the polls in 1865 un-

der the cry of retrenchment, but who have so managed the public affairs as to gain for themselves, as they well know, the withering re-liquiae—without submitting the measure to the people—urge us to pass a resolution to deprive our beloved country of its Constitution. Sir, I would ask can language be employed sufficiently strong to convey the disapproval of this act? I have heard strong language made use of here at times; I heard only the other day the Prov. Secretary make use of the word "traitor" to another hon. gentleman across the floor of this house. Sir, I will not make use of that term, but I am at a loss for language sufficiently strong and severe without doing so. What can be said of the men who, in the face of the fact of nine-tenths of the people of this Province being decidedly adverse to the passage of this resolution, propose to sweep away our constitution and make us subservient to the rule of Canadian Statesmen, in whose wisdom for governing a country we have but little faith, and from whom we are severed for six months of the year as to any mode of travelling over British territory by land, and entirely shut out by sea, and for the other six months we have very indifferent communication. It is said we are to have the Inter-colonial Railway. This may be the case in the course of time, but the Inter-colonial Railway should have preceded the Union of the Colonies. Why, sir, suppose a war was to break out between the United States and G. Britain, and the General Parliament had to be convened in win or months at Ottawa, how are we to reach there? Would it be over the ice, or on snow shoes over land? Sir, had the public men of Canada been true to their interests, and the Colonial Secretaries of England been true to their engagements, we should long before this have had the railway built.—Can Canadian or Nova Scotians expect to finance that by the offers made by the British Government in 1862 to which the Canadians refused to accede? If they had acceded, the road might now have been built. The reason for Canada not accepting the offers then made may have been that they expected at some future day to use that work as a lever by which to force the Maritime Provinces into a union; and, sir, may we not well believe that they have accomplished the end in view? They must be famous for their powers of persuasion or they never could have buttered the delegation from this Province so smoothly as to get them to sign that document at Quebec. I believe it was at the last great dinner at Montreal that the iniquitous scheme was completed—a scheme so unjust to the people of this Province—a scheme by which the country and the Constitution they loved so well have been most grossly bartered away—and a scheme that the government of this Province will not, nay, sir, dare not, submit to the people at the polls. But it may be said by the friends of this measure that the scheme is to be altered, they having met the propositions of the hon. gentleman from Richmond, but does not every one know that this is a farce, a delusion? Does not every one know that that proposition was known to the government long before it was announced on the floors of this house? This resolution is that the British Government shall arbitrate between contending parties, when the British Government have already declared in favor of the Quebec scheme, and, I believe, without looking minutely into the matter; but having passed on the Quebec scheme already, Nova Scotia having already pledged themselves over and over again to the Quebec scheme, does any one suppose that they will compromise themselves by going as a delegation to England to persuade the British Government to make alterations which they well know Canada will not agree to. They would be fools if they did, seeing the way in which this resolution passed this house, if it does pass. Do you wish to reap inult upon injury by trying to delude the people of this country with such a resolution? Sir, I say again do you wish to insult the common intelligence of Nova Scotians? Several questions that should be answered by the promoters of this scheme are these: Did not the delegation at Quebec sit in secret? Did they not conclude that Quebec scheme with closed doors? Was it not understood by all the parties then that the terms of the scheme were not to be disclosed until all the delegates should return? Did not the Canadian delegates proceed post-haste to England, there to implore the Secretary for the Colonies to aid their propositions? And was it not urged at the Colonial Secretary's office nearly as soon as in Temperance Hall? Sir, I do not wonder that the Canadians should with such haste endeavour to excite the sympathies of the British govern-

ment in favour of this scheme when they had made a bargain so much to their own advantage. I believe that could the disadvantages that this involves to Nova Scotia have been shown to the British government they could not have been so blind to our interests as to favour such a scheme; but all this will be represented to the British government. It is not impossible nor unlikely that this may yet be a question of greater moment in the Parliament of England than may now be imagined, and when it is known that this Quebec scheme is so distasteful to the people of this province; when the injustice of the case comes to be known, and the discontent and strife that will be engendered thereby, I feel some hope that the British government will pause before they pass an act to make this resolution become the law of the land. I presume that the British government will have a detailed account of the whole scheme; a pound's shillings and pence version of the whole affair; a matter of fact proposition for them to solve; and when they do know, as I believe they do not know, that Nova Scotia must lose at least \$200,000 a year by the arrangement, which they will have to make up by direct taxation—and that will be a mode of raising money—and that will be likely to create a very bad feeling and perhaps almost a revolution in the country, they will pause before they pass the act. But, sir, in making use of this language, I am quite aware that I shall be styled by the promoters of this infamous scheme an annexationist; but this I deny, and I claim to possess as loyal feelings to my beloved Queen as any man in this assembly, and it is with feelings loyal to the crown of Great Britain that I warn you now of the danger there is of creating a feeling of hostility to the Government of Britain by the passage of this act. The feelings of the people of England have been quoted here by the hon. Attorney General, and the applause he received at the Manchester dinner when introduced as one of the union delegates. But, sir, did the honorable Attorney General ask them their views of our relation to England under the union? If he had they would have told him that united we would no longer be an expense to England for protection. And this is the general impression of the people of England. I was in England last winter, and in Manchester, and was in conversation with gentlemen there of high standing, some of the Manchester school, and found that this was the general idea that these Provinces united would no longer be a burthen to the people of England for protection, and I found this to be the idea of a very large proportion of the people there with whom I came in contact, but it did not mean to say that the British government enter into the idea. Now, sir, having kept the house so long at this late hour I will not prolong my remarks, but should have done so if time had been allowed. I feel that I am doing my duty to Nova Scotia, as my native land, to the people I am here to represent, and to myself, by voting against the resolution laid on the table by the hon. Prov. Secy., and for the amendment offered by the hon. and learned gentleman from Guysboro.

REMARKS OF MR. HATFIELD.

Mr. HATFIELD said:—I feel that the duty devolves upon me of expressing my views of this resolution. I may state that until this evening no one has been informed of the way in which I intend to vote; when meetings were held at Yarmouth and Argyle I said I would not give a decided opinion until the Legislature met, and the pros and cons of the question laid before us. I have come here, I have heard speeches upon both sides, and have made up my mind to vote against the resolution which the government have introduced. I feel that the duty which I owe to my constituency, and that duty is not a small one, requires that I should take this action. Since coming to this house I have supported the government almost to a vote, sometimes with a disregard of my personal position, but on this measure I will do what is right irrespective of political feelings and with a determination to stand or fall by the course which I pursue. I have frequently felt diffident in addressing the house, feeling that I was a young member and unaccustomed to public speaking, in comparison with some gentlemen who frequently address us, but to-night I stand firm in the conviction that the course I am taking is one that becomes my position. We find that out of the ten or eleven lawyers who have seats in this house, nine are in favor of the scheme, and what is their object unless it be personal aggrandisement? To-night we have seen a gentleman sitting here, and not revealing even to his own colleagues that he had "paired off" with another member and did not intend to vote on the division. That certainly looks suspicious, and has convinced me that all the cir-

cumstances connected with the transaction have not been revealed. I have made these few remarks without preparation, and would not have spoken to-night if the Prov. Secretary had not forced the division.

REMARKS OF DR. BROWN.

Dr. BROWN said:—At this hour of the night, Mr. Speaker, and fatigued as I am by a long journey, it is not possible for me to collect my thoughts sufficiently to make a two hours speech on this all-important subject, I shall therefore content myself with a few remarks directed to one or two points only. I should not object to the resolution before the house, provided the people were allowed to decide the question. It is not impossible, though I confess I cannot see it, that Union with Canada may be ultimately beneficial to the country. If so, the people in process of time would gradually alter their tone, and at last willingly adopt the change.

But I ask, sir, where is the necessity for this indecent haste? Haste is a two-fold sense. Haste, not only in cramming this measure down the people's throats without their consent, and against the will of a vast majority, but haste in bringing this debate to a close to-night, and thus stifling the voice of free discussion. Nothing can be more arbitrary than the conduct of the government. They can fritter away days and weeks on useless and frivolous matters, but on the great question, whether Nova Scotia shall retain her rights and liberties—her very existence, the Provincial Secy. denies us an hour. I ask, sir, where is the necessity for action? Why not remain as we are? What is the emergency? Is it, because the Provincial Secretary has admitted, the government and union party in this house are afraid to hear the voice of the people? I thank the Prov. Secy. for the admission—it is candid, and explains his position. The emergency, Mr. Speaker, is not the emergency of the people, it is the emergency of the rulers of the people. Why is it that they will not refer this measure, this most momentous of all measures that ever came before this Legislature, to the people whom it most concerns? simply because they dare not. Do you suppose, sir, any man imagines, if the government had a ghost of a chance they would hesitate to appeal to the hustings? The voice of the people and the voice of their representatives are stifled, because they know it is against them. Now, sir, this act may be perpetrated, the rights of the people of Nova Scotia may be trampled on, and ignored, but I apprehend this will not be the end of the contest. The voice of the people though silenced for the present will make itself heard. I mistake much if the free and intelligent people of Nova Scotia will quietly submit to be crushed and overridden—I mistake much if the honest and enlightened farmers of Kings County will quietly submit to it. And when I speak of Kings County I mean not only South Kings, which I have the honor to represent, but North Kings which is I have every reason to know, equally strong in its condemnation of this measure. I do not hesitate to declare it as my opinion in the presence of the members for North Kings that one-fourths of the electors of that district are opposed to it, and are only waiting for an opportunity to sweep it and its authors away together. My learned friend from North Kings, Dr. Hamilton, says he has learned from a correspondent in Kings that Mr. Howe's letters have had the effect of cementing the Conservatives in that county. I agree with him that the minds of all parties, with few exceptions concur in one point—in denouncing union with Canada. I have just returned from a visit home, and find the anti-union feeling stronger than ever.

Several of my pro-confederate neighbours said to me, they would like confederation but not without the test of the people's approval.—Dr. Hamilton also disputes the reported issue of the Canning meeting, now I have it from the most reliable authority, authority that the learned member himself will not question, that against one of the resolutions carried, there was but one vote, and against the other—only three or four. Canning is in the Doctor's immediate vicinity and a large number of his constituents reside there. The learned member referred also to his probable re-ironment from public life. I advise him to do so by all means. He certainly could not do a more prudent thing. I should be glad also to hear my friend and colleague Mr. Bill give his opinion on the resolutions before the house. On a question of such transcendent proportions and magnitude, a question truly of life and death, no man should be content with giving a silent vote. I conclude by imploring the house to let the people be heard at the polls.

Dr. HAMILTON:—My observations merely referred to North Kings, I did not refer to South

Kings, and I am prepared to-morrow to resign my seat, if Dr. Brown will contest it with me. With regard to the meeting at Canning, I have four letters in my pocket referring to it; one says there were sixty persons present; another says eighty; another says that the number was one hundred, and a good many of them were boys. I should like to ask Dr. Brown who investigated the meeting? I think the suggestion came from a gentleman not far from me. As to South Kings, the hon. member pleads that I have stood at the polling places pleading for him before he chose to change sides. I have in my possession a letter from one of the first men in Kings, and he says he hopes the House will pass Confederation; another letter is from a person who says he would like to see the American flag floating over the Province, and perhaps such sentiments as his had a good deal to do with the Canning meeting.

Dr. BROWN:—I accept the learned member's challenge to meet him at North Kings. It will give me great pleasure to vacate my seat to-morrow, if he will do the same for that purpose. It will be a pleasant and innocent way for him to learn the opinion of his constituents. I don't know who the learned member's correspondents are. Dr. R. Eaton, Esq. was mine, and the Doctor himself will agree with me that this gentleman is entitled to credit and respect. I did not, as he insinuates, suggest the meeting at Canning—in that my learned friend has only made a bad guess.

Mr. KILLAM: It is well known, as was admitted by the Pro. Sec. himself, that the government do not possess the confidence of the country and what then is our position? The government in the face of this fact, bring forward a measure to change our entire constitution, and call upon members to support them. What would the leader of the House of Commons do if he were obliged to make such an admission? The observations of some gentlemen who have spoken to-night I think will give the government a lesson that cannot soon be forgotten.

Mr. McKAY said:—I intend to adopt a different course from that pursued by my colleague on this question, and I will state a few of the reasons which influence me. Last winter I was opposed to the Quebec scheme; this session a resolution has been introduced to modify that scheme in its details. If a change has become necessary for our security, let us form our institutions by our own judgment, and not by the direction of the neighboring Republic. One of the members for Yarmouth admitted that nine tenths of the people of that county are in favour of annexation,—these are opinions which no loyalist can endorse. Another gentleman taking a prominent stand in this discussion has made remarks concerning our Lieut. Governor which I cannot endorse. I have received some letters from my constituents, asking me to support the resolution, and I have received none to the contrary.

Mr. KILLAM replied that his colleague, Mr. Townsend, had merely intimated that a majority of the people of Yarmouth preferred annexation to Confederation.

Mr. LOCKE said that in the session of 1862 the Atty. General applied the phrase "dumb logs" to gentlemen whom he opposed,—that expression could be very appropriately applied to gentlemen on the government side, who allowed the speeches of gentlemen opposed to the resolution to pass unanswered.

Hon. ATTY. GEN. said that the gentlemen to whom that phrase was applied in 1862, bore it pretty easily, and he presumed that his friends could do the same on this occasion.

The question was then taken upon Mr. S. Campbell's amendment, which was negatived, eighteen voting for it and thirty-one against it.

For the amendment—Messrs. Killam, Hebb, Hatfield, Balcom, Townsend, Lawrence, Moore, Robertson, Locke, S. Campbell, Blanchard, McLellan, Ross, King, Ray, Brown, Coffin and Annand.

Against—Messrs. Bill, Hill, C. J. Campbell, Shannon, D. Fraser, Allison, Jno. Campbell, Whitman, Pryor, Longley, Parker, Hefferman, Kauback, McKay, Jost, Donkin, Bourinot, Tobin, Miller, McDonnell, McKinnon, Robt. Sheau, McFarlane, Prov. Sec., Atty. General, Blanchard, Cowie, Hamilton, Colin Campbell, Smith and Archibald.

The resolution passed 31 to 19, Mr. J. Fraser voting with the minority.

The House adjourned.