

talked of the mighty West and the boundless country behind us, and by that means this subject of union obtained a little airing; but nobody ever supposed that it amounted to anything more than an escape of gas.

I dare say that the four Canadian Ministers referred to in the despatch of the Colonial Secretary of the 17th of June, 1865, were very able men. If all the virtue and talent are on the side of Confederation, as we have been told by the honorable and learned gentleman, (Hon. Mr. McCully) then they must have been very superior men. No doubt Mr. Gladstone, and the other members of Her Majesty's Government mentioned in the despatch of the Colonial Secretary, to which I have just alluded, rather committed themselves without hearing the other side of the question. They are in the habit of being largely influenced by Canada, and perhaps it would suit them better to have us as an off-shoot, or a little town of Canada, and bearing about the same proportion to Canada that McNab's Island does to Nova Scotia.

Mr. Tilley has been alluded to. There was a nobleness in his downfall. He manfully appealed to the people at the polls. Although a great favorite in New Brunswick, the scheme of Confederation was so distasteful that he was rejected by the people. He may rise again, and I hope he will, if he comes out on the right side. He acted more nobly than our delegates, who shirked behind our mother.

It is a false imputation that everybody is disloyal that does not take the view of the Colonial Secretary without examining on what it is founded. The feeling of loyalty is stronger in the population of Nova Scotia than in an equal number of inhabitants in England, Scotland, or Ireland. The same may, perhaps, be said of New Brunswick. This trying to make it appear that England is forcing Confederation upon us is unjust to the Provinces as well as to the mother country.

Let me refer to the despatch from the late Lieutenant Governor, Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell, to the Colonial Secretary, of 27th of April, 1865. (The hon. gentleman then read as follows:—

"*Government House, Halifax, 27th April, 1865*

SIR,—I have the honor to report, for your information, that the following Resolution was passed by the House of Assembly on the 24th inst:—"Resolved, That in the opinion of this House, the negotiations for the Union of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island should be renewed, in accordance with the Resolution passed at the last session of the Legislature."

2. I need scarcely tell you that my Ministry has been most anxious to give the fullest possible effect to the declared wishes of Her Majesty's Government in favor of a general Confederation of the British North American Provinces. It is obvious, however, they would jeopardize the final success of that project, if, in a very divided state of public opinion, they had submitted it to the Legislature or the country at a time when the refusal of New Brunswick to form part of that Confederation had left such an enormous gap as the space occupied by that Province between Canada and Nova Scotia.

5. To such an extent did this feeling prevail that even the following preamble, which originally prefaced the Resolution just passed, had to be omitted, viz:—"Whereas, Under existing circumstances, an immediate Union of the British North American Provinces has become impracticable; And Whereas, a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces has become desirable, whether the larger Union be accomplished or not."

6. The feeling of the Legislature and the country seemed to be so unmistakably against the discussion of the Quebec Resolutions, without a hope of any immediate practical result during the present attitude of New Brunswick, that even the introducing resolution thereto in the above preamble was regarded as unreasonable. It was therefore withdrawn, and the Resolution itself in favor of resuming negotiations for the Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces was thereupon immediately carried without a division."

It appears then, that last Session Confederation could not be carried in our Legislature. There were more of the supporters of the present Government in the Assembly who were opposed to it than of the Opposition. I could not keep smiling on reading a letter in a recent number of the *Unionist*, referring to the union of Ireland with Great Britain. It appeared that when that measure was before the Irish Parliament there was a member who said that he must have five commissions for his five daughters, or he would vote against the Union. Accordingly Captain Henrietta and Lieutenant Sarah, &c, were appointed. As I found this letter in the *Unionist*, I suppose that the editor knows what is being done in this Province, and that he knew that Captains' and Lieutenants' commissions were flying about. Something has certainly made a great change—whether it is commissions in

the army for ladies, or real patriotism, I am at a loss to tell.

A great deal has been said about the advantages of Confederation for defensive purposes. The only reason that we are now in any danger is because, being sons of the best mother in the world, a Union was forged on some others of her sons, which was as hateful as this, and that they and their fathers were vexed by just such a question as this. It may be wrong to have a hard feeling on this ground, but they cannot help it, and this Union will create a feeling that we cannot help.

I have felt annoyed at the various ways in which the delegates have shown their disposition to put England or the Colonial Secretary before them, instead of taking a fair share of the responsibility of Confederation themselves. If Mr. Tilley should rise again he will rise honored,—he will live and die respected in the hearts of the people. He did not shirk the question of Confederation, but tested the education he had given to the people. I remember a paper which undertook to educate the young men of Nova Scotia, but the editor of that paper has never tested the education given. The question, however, has been spoken to pretty plainly by the people of Nova Scotia. Only three seats have been opened since Confederation was mooted, and in all three the people have spoken so plainly that Anti-Confederates have been elected, and in the last two the voice of the people was so strong against Confederation that all the candidates were Anti-Confederates.

Last Session a large number of petitions were presented against Confederation. This Session the Government said nothing about it in the Speech. If the Government had intended to act honestly, they should have mentioned it in the Speech, and they would have had a large number of petitions against it. Then this Resolution is introduced here, that this House may imitate the Legislative Council of New Brunswick. Halifax has so much influence in this House, and the country so little, that the Resolution may be expected to pass. Governments ought to have some little patriotism. Governments hitherto have had a policy by which they stood or fell.

I doubt whether the Nova Scotians who have been prominent in the advocacy of Confederation will ever rise high, even if the measure should carry. There never will be a monument raised over those men, unless it is done by Canada on some foreign State.

This is the first time that we have ever had a Government in Nova Scotia that sought to destroy her. Ever since I saw the paragraph in the *Unionist* about these commissions, knowing the Editor of that paper to be all but the leader of the Government on this question of Confederation, I feared for my country. It is no joke to carry this question against the wishes of the people. Nova Scotia is the nicest little Province in the dominions of Her Majesty, though she may have a bigger Canada, and a more extended India.

We cannot get those men who are a curse to our country before their constituents. But let the Resolution pass! Let this little Province which is second to none in Her Majesty's dominions have her independence destroyed, her name blotted out of existence,—and all without her inhabitants being consulted!

Hon. Mr. Dickey moved that the debate be adjourned.

The motion was agreed to, and the House shortly afterwards adjourned until Wednesday, the 11th inst.

WEDNESDAY, April 11th.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Dickey, several members being absent, the debate was adjourned until the next meeting of the House.

FRIDAY, April 13th.

HON. MR. DICKEY:—I rise, sir, for the purpose of moving that the debate on the resolution before the House be resumed. But for the assurance given by the Solicitor General at the opening of the debate, that New Brunswick will act in the same direction, I should have considered the resolution premature, and felt bound to oppose it. The question is now narrowed down simply to this:—the two Canadas having taken action in favor of Confederation, and the Government having taken the responsibility of assuring us that New Brunswick is about to act, shall we accept or reject it? In this aspect of matters it appears to me that we have no alternative but to accept the resolution. I do this myself the more willingly, because I have all along considered that the course proposed by the resolution is the one which should have been adopted

in this matter. I have always contended that the Legislature should be first asked to deal with the principle of this measure, and afterwards that delegates should be appointed by its authority to deal with the details, instead of undertaking to settle the details before the principle was agreed to. Had this course been adopted, much difficulty would have been avoided; and federation might ere this have been a fixed fact.

I think the honorable gentleman who has spoken against the resolution ought to feel gratified equally with myself that the Quebec scheme has been laid aside. The simple questions now before us are, first, union or no union; second, shall we appoint delegates to arrange the scheme of that union irrespective of the Quebec resolutions. I stated, formerly, my objections to the Quebec scheme, as to which I had the misfortune to differ from my colleagues, and subsequent events have amply justified the course which I then adopted: therefore I need hardly repeat that the action now taken meets my entire approval. None of the Maritime Provinces have ratified the Quebec resolutions, and we are now, with the tacit approval of Canada laying a new platform of principle first, and details afterwards.

I confess I am not over sanguine as to the advantages to be derived from Confederation. Looking at the question in a commercial point of view, the enterprise and industry of nations are not created by Act of Parliament. I can see, however, many advantages to result from the proposed union.

But is this union necessary or not is the question which presses very much on my mind at the present moment. I am surprised that the honorable gentleman who opposed the resolution was not prepared to take the ground that union was not necessary. I have listened in vain for any argument of that kind from him. I feel that when we look at what is transpiring around us, arguments on that subject are not needed from me to-day. Last year we went fully into the subject, and, as I have no desire to repeat myself or anybody else, I shall not now enter into the question at large. Indeed I think we should abandon the bad habit of repeating what other gentlemen have said either in the form of argument or otherwise, a habit which would not be tolerated in the House of Commons. I feel that for me to say much on the question is especially unnecessary after the exhaustive speeches made by the mover and seconder of this resolution.

We have been told that it is not the time when the enemy is at the gate to enter on an amendment of the Constitution,—that Nero fiddled when Rome was burning. But we are dealing with a matter of no light or trivial moment,—we are preparing seriously and deliberately to set our house in order—to consolidate our Colonial Institutions, and so far from its being an objection to the question of union being now considered that the present is a time of imminent crisis, a time of impending danger is pre-eminently the time when instead of keeping isolated and apart, we should seek to get closer together and to become consolidated with one united whole. It is no stronger argument than this can be urged against the passage of the resolution, I shall feel constrained to support it. That being the aspect of the matter which has pressed itself very much on my own mind, I took the opportunity when I addressed the House on this subject last session, of saying that this is a question partly Provincial and partly Imperial, and I said that I should feel bound to defer very largely to the expressed wishes of the Imperial Government. Now, can there be a doubt on this point, not only as to the opinion of the British Ministers, but the great body of intelligent public opinion in England? We were told the other day that the organs of public opinion in England were in favor of Confederation. This is correct; and during a stay of some months last year in England, I found that the all but unanimous opinion of leading people there on both sides of politics, with whom I came in contact, is in favor of this Union. Let me not be misunderstood. It is not merely because the British Ministry,—for I will not speak of Her Majesty,—are in favor of Confederation, that I feel constrained to support it, but because the balance of advantages is decidedly in its favor. I frankly confess that the enlightened public opinion of England weighs most strongly with me, especially at a moment like the present. I believe every gentleman here is as much impressed as myself with a feeling of deference to the Imperial authorities, and is equally desirous to meet their views as far as possible. It is our duty as loyal subjects to look into this matter, and see if

what we are asked to do is not for our best interests. In that view, though not over sanguine as to the mercantile part of the question, I feel that the union proposed is for the best interests of the people of Nova Scotia. Now we were told the other day that England never urged this question of Confederation upon us, that it was all the work of that Bugbear,—the Charlottetown Convention, and we were referred to a despatch of June, 1865,—as being the first time when England spoke out, and asked us to assent to the scheme. Now, the honorable member is entirely mistaken.

Hon. Mr. Whitman.—I think the honorable gentleman is not stating correctly what I said. I did not say, that the date of that despatch was the first time that the British Government had spoken on this question.

Hon. Mr. Dickey.—I stated the general outline of the hon. gentleman's argument correctly as I think, and that certainly was that the Charlottetown Convention was the first thing which led the British Government to press Confederation upon us, and that the first despatch approving of it was after the Quebec Conference. How did this question come before that Convention? It came before it at the instance of Lord Monck, but inspired by whom? Have we any doubt that it was by the British Government? Inspired by whom, I say again.

Hon. Mr. Whitman.—Canada.

Hon. Mr. Dickey.—Pardon me a moment. The despatch from the Colonial Secretary directly sanctioning Confederation was written on the 1st Oct., 1864, before the Quebec Conference, and I read from the Journals to show the honorable member how strong Mr. Cardwell's language is. Without wearying the House by enlarging upon this part of the subject, I think it can hardly be denied that from first to last this has been the settled, deliberate policy of Her Majesty's Government.

Following close upon the Conference came a despatch affirmatively approving of what had been done. I will not say that in that despatch the Colonial Secretary agreed with me, but I agreed with him, for he said that the resolutions required important modification. Every step since that time has shown an uninterrupted current of authority from the Home Government in favor of Confederation. But apart from that, supposing that England had not asked us before to assent to Confederation, let me say to the honorable gentleman does she not ask us now? And if we look for her co-operation and support in our hour of need, is it not our duty as loyal subjects to meet her views as far as possible?

Feeling, then, the pressing necessity for union, and the strong desire of the Imperial authorities, I confess that I was not surprised to find that the honorable gentleman was not prepared to oppose union on principle. His objections, I assume, are rather to the mode of dealing with it than to union itself.

We have been told that it is necessary to appeal to the people. That is a matter which has pressed me very much. I have turned it over in my mind in every possible form, but I have been obliged to come to the conclusion that the only proper and constitutional mode in which the question can be dealt with is by the Legislature itself, as representing the well understood wishes of the people, and by the tribunal of ultimate resort in all countries owing allegiance to the British Crown,—the Imperial Parliament. I might point you to every constitutional change which has taken place, and I can find no instance in which it has been by any other authority than that of the Legislature, or the Imperial Parliament, or both. Take the union of the two Canadas, and of New Zealand. Take what occurred in Jamaica the other day. It may be said that that was a case of rebellion, but it has never been admitted by the British Government to be more than a partial and temporary outbreak. What has the Legislature of Jamaica done? Changed the mode and form of their Government? No, but uprooted the whole system, and they have taken the constitutional ground that the Legislature had the authority to do this. All changes of this character have been based on the authority of the Local Legislature and the Imperial Parliament, and not on a direct appeal to the people.

Let us look at the matter practically. Reference has been made to New Brunswick. The gentleman who referred to the subject has hardly done justice to the question of Union in that Province. The honorable and learned member (Hon. Mr. McCully) stated that Union was rejected by the people of that Province last year, and yet that we now find that something like one half, if not a majority of them—and in that probably he is correct—are prepared