

almost ashamed to refer to it. It has been said that this matter could be settled by the three Financial Secretaries in a week. How did it arise? As it regards Nova Scotia, it arose from the mistake of the merchants of Halifax forty years ago, in raising the price of the doubloon in connection with Province paper from £3 17s. 6d. to £4. In order to remedy the difficulty we have only to correct that error, and to enact that hereafter in the payment of all debts, Bank notes, and other obligations, the gold sovereign shall be reckoned at 24s. 4d., as it is in Canada and New Brunswick, or that 97½ cents shall be equivalent to 100 cents of present debt in the gold value I have named, and then you will have a uniform currency in Canada, New Brunswick, and this Province.

Hon. Mr. McCully.—How will it affect Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland?

Hon. Mr. Brown—I did not refer to these Colonies. I referred only to Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. After all it is a very small matter.

Now as to the Inter-Colonial Railway. We have been told that by union we can obtain this railway on much better terms than were agreed to by the three Provinces, and that we will only have to pay one-tenth of its cost. The fallacy of that argument, as every Canadian well knows, is that the people of Nova Scotia, under any tariff, will contribute more to the general revenue than the people of Canada. The people of Nova Scotia, from the character of their pursuits in fishing, mining, ship building, &c., require to purchase a larger amount of dutiable articles, in proportion to their numbers, than the people of Canada. That is pretty well proved by the respective revenues of the Provinces.

I regard the opinions from the Home Government as having been elicited by communications from these colonies. The Canadian Government had good reasons of its own for pressing union upon the Colonial Secretary, though I do not mean to say that he previously considered it disadvantageous to these Colonies to be united. A change has been a pressing necessity with Canada for years, but there is no necessity for the proposed union in this colony.

Now as regards the question of public defence. I observe that the Canadian Ministry agreed with the British minister to expend a sum of one million of dollars for defence, if the British Government enabled them to raise the money by their guarantee. Now I ask the attention of the Solicitor General to this point. Suppose the people of Nova Scotia were asked to contribute towards defence, in proportion to that amount. According to the population of Nova Scotia, they might be asked to give one-tenth or one hundred thousand dollars, and they could afford to do it; but with respect to the necessity for it,—except at present, on account of the threatened Fenian attack,—I suppose that no one really believes that it is necessary for the defence of Nova Scotia, that we should do any thing more than qualify the Militia to act in case of emergency.

There is a disposition, just now, to lay great stress on the patriotism and loyalty of the people of this Province. It may be asked what is the ground of this patriotism and loyalty? Everybody feels attached to the country to which he belongs and, sometimes, there is an inclination to think more favorably of our institutions than the facts will warrant.

The "Times" says that whenever the people of these North American Colonies wish to be relieved from Colonial dependence, the mother country will not object. It is well known that the time may come when it may suit the interests, both of England and these Colonies, that the latter should be entirely self-dependent. The expense of defending these Colonies, in case of a quarrel with the United States, would, probably, be enormous, and England might be glad to be freed from the likelihood of incurring it. I, for one, am willing that Nova Scotia should, either alone or jointly with the other colonies, relieve her from all anxiety and care that she does not choose cheerfully and willingly to continue.

In Europe there are small States whose rights are preserved by the agreement of surrounding nations. Even cities are so protected in Germany. But even if there were no such examples in Europe, we might have one in America. The class of people in America that has given birth to the filibustering race has very much changed. It was a party which grew up to protect and to extend the institution of slavery. That object and principle no longer exist. I therefore do not apprehend any danger of our coming into warlike contact with that country in the present day.

The hon. member from Colchester congratulated the people of Nova Scotia on their being allowed by the British Government to send ambassadors abroad to negotiate treaties of commerce. We do not ask or require any aid from Canada or Canadian statesmen in that direction.

At the same time I concur in much that has been said by the hon. member from Colchester. When the Canadian ministers found themselves unable to carry out what they had proposed in perfect good faith, I was astonished at the virulent manner in which they were attacked by the press of all parties both in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Such conduct was totally inexcusable. I am surprised to see the same people who then got up charges against the Canadians now ready to fall into their arms.

I am not quite satisfied yet as to the way in which this matter has been brought up for discussion in this House. The debate came upon me quite unexpectedly. Considering the way in which the Government dealt with the question last year, and that there have been no material grounds for change since, except the change in their own party, I certainly did not expect what has taken place.

This question is of far greater importance than it has ever been represented. When Responsible Government was introduced, in one aspect of it the change was scarcely perceptible, as it affected only half a dozen officers, though it was a great change. The measure proposed is a very great change, and it is astonishing, considering the manner in which the Quebec Scheme has been lauded both by the English press and the Government, that our Government should consent to abandon that wise and promising scheme!

My hon friend from Colchester thought that it would be right to ask the Government to submit the new scheme to the Legislature before it was finally passed. If that were done in some form, it would be a favorable change in the policy of the Government.

I cannot now believe that the people of this country will permit this or any other measure to be passed without their consent; and, that if for no other reason than that such an attempt is made, they will band themselves together to present their remonstrances and petitions at the foot of the Throne.

As to the School Act which has been referred to, I think that if the hon. member from Colchester refers to the report of the Superintendent of Education, and the reports of the Inspectors, he will find that the opinions of the people have changed as regards assessment for the support of schools, and that a majority of them would now support it. If it were not so, I would not consent to it. A series of accidental circumstances, rather than the good management of the Government, have taught the people to see that the schools must be supported by assessment. I admit that it was a difficult question, but I take it that no considerable party would oppose the Government on that point now.

I solemnly believe that however numerous the majority may be by which this resolution may pass, it will not have the desired effect. The people in New Brunswick are united to prevent the carrying out of the scheme, and to correct the maladministration of Governor Gordon, and the course he has taken will lead to difficulties. Here we have not that difficulty, but the conduct of our people will depend on what is done subsequent to the passage of this resolution.

Hon. Mr. Dickey.—I would ask the hon. gentleman who has just sat down how it is that he so entirely misconceives this question. He says that the Financial Secretaries of the different Provinces could arrange the difference of currency between the three Provinces in a week. I may say in the first place that they will not do it. And, why will they not do it? Because the local interests of their own Provinces are paramount with them. That is the simple reason, and you never can get a solution of the question until you make the interests of the whole homogeneous; and that you can only do by Union.

The honorable gentleman told us that this difference of currency was a very small matter. Now it is just this,—the British shilling is 1s. 3d. in one colony, 1s. 6d. in another, and 1s. 2½d. in a third. You cannot travel 10 miles from Amherst westwardly, without being obliged to go to a money changer unless you are willing to loose on your money. The same thing occurs in going from New Brunswick to Canada, and yet we are told that this is no difficulty at all!

Then as regards tariffs he tells us that that all difficulty on that score can be

satisfactorily arranged without union. I differ with him again on that point. Local interests will always lead to the imposition of duties on articles from another colony.

As to assessment for schools the honorable member was told by the honorable member from Colchester that he had voted to impose that on the people against their will. How did he answer that? He says that the people have changed their minds. He does not deny that he voted to impose this assessment on the people against their wishes, but he says that they have now altered their opinion about it. May we not hope that the same change in public opinion, as has occurred on the question of assessment for schools, will take place on this question, and that public opinion will settle down strongly in favor of union.

Hon. Mr. Brown.—In what I said as to the difference of currency, I referred to the currencies of New Brunswick and Canada alone. These currencies have been fixed. When the change was made 40 years ago gold was the basis. In the United States as well as these Provinces, they still, in reckoning the value of sterling exchange, refer to the old Halifax currency. In Nova Scotia, as I have already said, the Province notes became inconvenient, the gold and silver were disappearing, and it was thought that specie could be retained in the country by raising the value of the doubloon from £3 17s. 6d. to £4. It did not make one iota of change as to the power of retaining the specie. However, that was the wisdom of the merchants of Halifax of that day.

The honorable member who has just sat down referred to the difficulty a person would have in purchasing commodities in the different Provinces. If he would take a gold coin and change it in any of them, he would find that he would obtain precisely the same quantity of imported or other commodities for it in one Province as in the other; any difference would arise from other causes entering into price than the difference of currency. That is an answer to all that he has said on this point.

Hon. Mr. CHIPMAN—I rise to second the amendment, and have much pleasure in doing so, as I think it ought to pass.

Hon. SOL GENERAL intimated that he desired to insert in the resolution the words "with the Imperial Government" after the words "arrange a scheme of union." The former words having been accidentally omitted.

The resolution was then so modified.

Hon. Mr. HOLMES.—A great many arguments have been adduced to prove that this question should be submitted to the people at the polls. I ask, if it were so submitted, on what would the decision be,—would it be on Confederation? Twenty or thirty years experience have taught me what it would be.

We have been told that the question should be referred to the next General Assembly. Now we must have either Confederation, or Annexation to the United States. Now if Confederation is a good thing, the sooner we obtain it the better, and in all that has been said in this debate against it, I have not heard any one say that it is a bad thing, and it is said that silence gives consent. Those who spoke against the Resolution only asked for time.

I am strongly impressed with the fact that the best minds in England, Scotland and these Provinces are in favor of this Union. I think my opinion ought, to a certain extent, to be guided by that of these. Have the British Government ever done anything to injure us? There are men in this country who would wish to see us annexed to the United States. I am not one of them, and I hope I will not be, as long as I retain common sense.

Who can deny that Union is strength? It is an adage that has passed current from time immemorial. Where is the connection between the Provinces now? Where are the links that unite them? They are not to be found.

Taking all these circumstances into consideration, they induce me to come to the conclusion that union is a good thing. I believe that there is no gentleman here who will deny that it is the desire of the British Government that we should be united. Britain has proved herself a kind mother to us, and I do not think that we would show our wisdom by proving refractory to her will now. There are some persons who may be refractory now who may repent after a while, acting like the son who, although he refused to obey at first, afterwards repented and did what was right, and was commended. I put it to the House if by the Quebec scheme the debt of Canada is apportioned according to her population, and that of Nova Scotia according to hers, is that not fair?

Hon. Mr. Brown.—That is not disputed.

Hon. Mr. Holmes.—It is disputed outside.

Hon. Mr. Brown—I do not dispute it. It has been arranged for.

Hon. Mr. Holmes.—It is time that we are well enough off as we are; but is there any prospect of our being allowed to remain in our present condition? Are we not exposed to a powerful neighbor holding the Monroe doctrine,—America for the Americans?

Hon. Mr. WHITMAN.—The hon. gentleman who spoke last, with several others, appears to be very much afraid of the people. Various excuses have been made why the wishes of the people should not be expressed. One gentle-

man compares it to a School Bill, which can be settled by the people, at all events, every four years. This is a question which is to be decided for ever. If this measure passes, the present Legislature will be the last one in Nova Scotia worthy of the name. The only means that the British Constitution gives for the Government of the parent country is the well understood wishes of the people. If those wishes are not known, the Government appeal to the people. The people of Nova Scotia have expressed their wishes on this question by their votes as far as they could get at their representatives, and by petitions.

A great deal has been said about the Queen, in connection with this matter. With all her excellent qualities, the Queen has not really as much voice in public questions as an elector. The same may be said of her Representative here. In England the Queen's name is never hawked about in connection with any measure. It is almost a new thing even to hear a Governor's name used in this way. The Queen's name has been hawked about in the newspapers here in relation to this question,—almost in a sacrilegious style. We have been told that the Queen,—the Governor,—the General,—the Admiral wants it.

Nova Scotia has always been a dutiful child. She has never burned a Parliament House or been in open rebellion. She has been as faithful a child as England has been a mother. I cannot imagine how persons can talk of the voice of the people not being a thing to be listened to. It is surely no new doctrine that it should be listened to on all great public questions.

No Nova Scotian underrates the value of Canada. I believe that Canadian statesmen have expended a great deal of money, but I think we are getting pretty well educated up to that business too, and, in time, may equal Canada in that respect. Canada is no poor country. It is on account of her greatness that I object to union with her, because I believe that she will swamp little Nova Scotia.

We have been told that Union is strength. If these colonies could be united as closely as England and Scotland are united, union, in that case, might be strength, but it is impossible so to unite countries so distant from one another as these Colonies, and with so sparse a population.

Union will not give us a single man more. We can make no defence ourselves against such a powerful neighbor as the United States, and we have no reason to believe that England will not protect us as well whether disunited or united. I have yet to learn that Britain wishes to force us into an alliance that is hateful to our people. It is a very serious thing for this House to pass a hateful law in opposition to three-fourths or more of the population of a country as intelligent, peaceful, and loyal as ours.

It has been said that all who oppose the resolution suppose that all the Canadians will be banded against us. Not exactly that, but all mankind are naturally selfish, and the interests of the Canadians being different from ours, they being wholly an agricultural people, and also having so much larger a representation than we have, I fear that our interests would suffer in their hands. The majority in all large bodies will always carry the day.

The speech of the hon. gentleman from Cumberland, (Hon. Mr. Dickey,) rather pleased me. It was what might be called a non-committal speech. He was something like I am in regard to Railway matters. He seemed disposed to trust the Government, but had some little doubts. The whole burden of his speech rested upon the action of New Brunswick. If the Sol General should be mistaken in what he said, as to her action, the hon. gentlemen's speech, with all its beauties, would be rather a bad letter.

I do not consider the resolution is any better than the Quebec scheme, as the Canadians are already thoroughly pledged to that scheme, and none but those who are also pledged to it will be seen as delegates from these Provinces.

We have heard parties opposed to this scheme charged with eating the bread of the British Government. I think a remark of the same kind would apply as well to the different Receiver Generals, Railway Commissioners and other members of this House. They are eating the people's bread whose rights are now being sacrificed, as much as the hon. gentleman who has been referred to, ate the bread of the British Government.

The Sol General spoke of the immense importance of England. When she was a small country with only 350,000 people, she did not go to a foreign Government, and transfer her revenue to a country a thousand miles away. It was by extending her Colonial possessions, and keeping her revenue under her own control that she became great. In conclusion I may say that if this union does not seriously check the prosperity of the Province I shall be mistaken.

Hon. Mr. McHefley.—I am not opposed to union, but I am opposed to pressing it upon the people when I know that so large a majority are opposed to it. In deference to them I feel constrained to vote for the amendment.

The question was then taken on the amendment, when there appeared:—

For the amendment—Hon. Messrs. McHefley, Brown, Chipman, Whitman, and Tupper—5.

Against it—Hon. Receiver General, Hon. Messrs. Andeson, McCully, Archibald, Patterson, Pineo, Creighton, Holmes, Hon. Sol. General, Hon. Messrs. Keith, Cutler, Dickey, Hon. President—13.

The amendment was therefore lost.

The question was then taken on the resolution, when there appeared:—

For the motion—Hon. Receiver General, Hon. Messrs. Andeson, McCully, Archibald, Patterson, Pineo, Creighton, Holmes, Hon. Sol. General, Hon. Messrs. Keith, Cutler, Dickey, Hon. President—13.

Against it—Hon. Messrs. McHefley, Chipman, Brown, Whitman, Tupper—5.

The resolution was therefore carried, and the House then adjourned.