

three years it seems to have become the unalterable policy of the Crown towards the Colonies, to insist upon their uniting, in order to relieve Great Britain from the *whole* burthen of defending them in the event of any hostilities that might arise between the Mother Country and any Foreign Power. The subordinate question of Defence is, indeed, the one which may be said to have brought the primary question of Union to the position which it now occupies in the eyes of the world ; and there is no doubt that if the Union be accomplished, it will be owing to the sentiment of self-preservation against the perils which now threaten the Colonies from abroad, more than to a belief in the pecuniary advantages which new commercial regulations would confer.

The first official action on the Union Question arose out of a resolution adopted unanimously by the Parliament of Nova Scotia on the 15th April, 1861. It was moved by the Provincial Secretary, and is as follows:—

“ WHEREAS the subject of a Union of the North American Provinces, or of the Maritime Provinces of British America, has been from time to time mooted and discussed in all the Colonies ;

“ And whereas, while many advantages may be secured by such a Union, either of all these Provinces, or of a portion of them, many and serious obstacles are presented which can only be overcome by mutual consultation of the leading men of the Colonies, and by free communication with the Imperial Government : therefore *Resolved*, That His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be respectfully requested to put himself in communication with His Grace the Colonial Secretary, and His Excellency the Governor General, and the Lieutenant Governors of the other North American Provinces, in order to ascertain the policy of Her Majesty's Government and the opinions of the other Colonies, with a view to an enlightened consideration of a question involving the highest interest, and upon which the public mind in all the Provinces ought to be set at rest.