

annexation was raised. (Hear, hear.) He remembered that twenty-five years ago he had occupied the honourable position of Speaker of the Parliament of his own country, and he knew then that it would have been his duty to repress any member who might invoke the name of the Queen, or the Queen's representative, as an argument for the adoption of any measure. He had read a few months ago that some one in Canada had said he would like to see Joseph Howe come forward and take the oath of allegiance. He would cast no such imputation as was therein conveyed upon the character of any man in Canada, but could appeal to his conduct in the past to show how far he had been faithful to his obligations to the flag of his country. At a time when the Provinces were threatened he had laid aside his party feeling, as his honourable friend from York now proposed to do, and had offered his services to the leader of the Government. Again during the Crimean war he went to the States as the confidential agent of the empire, and recruited for two months despite the activity of Russian agents, without compromising himself or his Government. He was in Washington again the winter before last, and suggested to the British Minister the probable plans of the Fenians to seize the shipping on the seaboard, and at his suggestion the British squadron was ordered into Nova Scotia waters three months earlier than usual, so that the Fenians were frustrated in their designs. He did not mention this as a boast, for it was only what any loyal New Brunswicker or Canadian would have done. He only mentioned these things in reply to the charge of disloyalty and annexation that had been preferred against him. He did not believe that the people of Nova Scotia would ever be satisfied to submit to an act which had been forced upon them by such unjust and unjustifiable means. What was the Union, but a mere Act of Parliament? A mere Act of Parliament may fairly be criticized, and if bad its repeal may be agitated for; yet this Union Act had been spoken of as something against which it was treason to say a word. What had been all the great reforms effected in England, but the repeal of Acts of Parliament and the substitution of others? His Excellency alludes to the freedom of arranging details which were left to the representatives of the colonies: Why, he had read a thick volume of debates on this very question in the Canadian Parliament, and not a line of detail was altered or amended. It was then declared to have been a treaty, and could not

[Mr. Howe (Hants)]

be amended or changed. It was never laid before the people of New Brunswick, consequently no power was given in the arrangement of details; it was never submitted to the people of Nova Scotia. But he might be told that the representatives of the people, meaning the delegates, had had the arrangement of details. On this point he would not speak for Canada or New Brunswick, but as for Nova Scotia, the delegates did not represent the people, but a Legislature which had lost the popular confidence. He might ask what would be the course in the neighbouring Republic, if one State attempted to annex another without the consent of the people. And turning from the Republic to European examples, the Union Act between England and Scotland had been passed, clause by clause, by the Parliament of Scotland, as well as that of England, and so with the Union between Great Britain and Ireland; the Act had been passed, though corruptly, by the Parliament of Ireland. Even when Savoy and Nice were annexed to France, the people were consulted by popular vote, and Venice, though conquered by force, had been allowed the form of a popular expression of consent. It might be said that it was only a form, but they had been defeated by superior force, and had at least the satisfaction of yielding to irresistible power while the humiliation and degradation of Nova Scotians had been that they were deprived of their liberty without the opportunity of striking a blow, that by an intrigue, and not by force of arms, their liberties had been extinguished. Heretofore they had been accustomed to hear of the Union Act as a skeleton, and coming to the measures promised in the speech, he supposed would be the flesh and the skin. Among these measures was one for the reform of the currency. Well, he came from a country which had a sound currency; from a country where there never yet was a bank failure. He could not see how a sound bank could be broken by any Government, and no Government ought to have the power (hear, hear.) Next came the assimilation of Customs, Excise, and Revenue generally. This was a sore subject with the Province of Nova Scotia. For ten years they had had a surplus revenue every year but one. Even supposing the revenue was only raised to fifteen per cent, the Dominion would take away from them about 100,000 sovereigns a year. They would certainly have to pay a larger amount of duties than heretofore, and all they got in return was 80 cents a head—the price of a sheepskin in Nova Scotia. (Laughter). He would not go into