

Granada the privilege of self-government. He had at that moment supreme legislative power over the country,—it was his own country in right of his sovereignty,—he was its supreme legislator, and, as Lord Mansfield says, could have put to death every inhabitant, or have given any kind of government he pleased. By that Commission, in April, 1764, he divested himself of his legislative power. The Sovereign, it will be seen, is, as regards her rights and property, no more than another individual,—she has her rights, the people theirs. These rights are perfectly distinct and well defined by the Constitution, and the Queen can no more interfere with the rights of the Province than the Province can interfere with her prerogatives. The two are perfectly distinct and independent, excepting that the relations of sovereign and subject exist between them. In July, 1764, the same king by letters patent undertook to exercise the legislative powers himself, by imposing a tax upon the trade of Granada. A merchant who had paid the tax came to England, and sued the Collector for money received to his use, or as for money illegally exacted. The action was tried in Westminster Hall, and after four most solemn arguments by the ablest constitutional lawyers, a decision was arrived at. And what was that decision? That the king, having put his seal to the commission of Governor Melville, and conferred legislative power on Granada, had deprived himself of the power of legislation,—that he had thereby irrecoverably lost the power of legislation,—that therefore his subsequent Act was void, and the plaintiff thereupon recovered his money. That was the decision arrived at after the fullest deliberation, after the most mature consideration, and after the exercise of the first constitutional talent in Great Britain. The tax was held void, and why was it void? Simply because the King's seal stopped him from levying such a tax. He had in April sealed a commission authorizing the people to tax themselves, and in July, when he issued his letters patent to levy the tax, they were declared void, because he was stopped by the first seal from issuing the subsequent letters patent. My argument, which I shall now commence, shall be succinctly stated, and I shall endeavor to make it as clear as possible. But wishing to argue logically, I shall take the liberty of making two postulates. I shall demand it to be admitted in the first place that the people of Nova Scotia were never consulted as to whether they would part with their constitution or not. That is the first postulate, and let any man deny it who dares.

In 1863 the last elections preceding those of 18th September, 1867, were held; at that time the Canadian Quebec Scheme was not concocted. Therefore the question of Confederation was not before the people, and they did not pass upon it. Now the hon. member for Inverness became angry with some one for using the term "blacklegs," as applied to some of the statesmen of Nova Scotia. I do not like calling names, but it is singular that that very name has been applied by English travellers to the politicians of Canada. I think it is Mr. Trollope who has said that in that country the term "politician" is synonymous with "blackleg." As I said, I do not like to call names, but it is impossible to get on without calling things by their proper terms. How can I otherwise explain what I mean in referring to those Canadian schemers who stealthily concocted a plan for the subjugation of the people of Nova Scotia—the men who tried by bribery and corruption to jockey us out of our rights. Is the word inapplicable? I think not,—it is the most appropriate, and I say that the men who conducted these practices would be horsewhipped off any race-course in England as blacklegs. Our political knaves are not entitled, sir, to have such mild language applied to them,—they deserve something worse. There may have been some excuse for the blacklegs of Canada to lay hold of the revenue of Nova Scotia, but where is the excuse for the statesmen of this Province, who aided and assisted those men in destroying the liberties of the people? How shall I characterise such men as these? Men who, keeping the people from passing on a subject of such vital consequence to their interests, had the wickedness and cruelty in the dark and behind their backs to destroy the rights of their countrymen. Political assassins would be the name for them, and when I heard the honorable member for Inverness mention the name of Judas Iscariot I thought the association was discreditable to the celebrated traitor. Judas brought back the money,—he was therefore an honest man when compared with them. We will never catch one of those men bringing back the price of his treason. Judas also repented and showed himself a considerate man when out of a due regard for the best interests of his country he went and hanged himself. Those politicians have not the manliness to imitate his example and to commit such an act of self-inflicted Justice. That, Mr. Speaker, is my opinion. The honorable and learned member cited the conduct and language of Sir Robert Peel as authority. I did not wonder at his doing so for I do not now wonder at anything,—such amazing things do occur now-a-days that wonders have ceased. The spirit of amazement died within me when I heard the honorable member. Who was Sir Robert Peel? He was a great scholar, an English gentleman, a highly educated man and an orator, but he was a rat. For thirty years he headed a party and then wheeled round and joined his adversaries. And are not the gentlemen whose conduct I have been criticising all rats—political vermin? Was there one of them true to his political colors? I do not now of course refer