

men of England grumbling a little about the expense incurred in defending these colonies. I must confess I cannot see what that expense is. Great Britain is a maritime nation and a military power. She must have the best navies on the ocean and one of the strongest armies in the field. Where could she maintain her troops and navy more economically than in these Colonies. The climate is a very healthy one; the statistics show that mortality here is less than in any other part of the world. The people of England would never consent to a standing army remaining in their own country. Therefore the scattering of the troops through the colonies has been a kind of necessity. Therefore, so far from those colonies costing England anything they are little or no expense to her. She was always a kind mother although not a wise one at times. When she adopted her trade policy in 1848 she left these colonies entirely unprotected; she left the trade of Nova Scotia to be managed by people who knew nothing about it. She had up to that time managed our trade herself; she withdrew her fostering care and left us to walk alone. We have managed to live very happy and contentedly, but she did not act wisely towards these colonies. Since 1848 no less than six millions of people have left England, Ireland and Scotland; where have they gone to? They have gone directly past us into the United States. If England had been a judicious foster mother she would have diverted the emigration into these colonies. If she had encouraged the commercial advantages of Nova Scotia and the agricultural capabilities of Canada we would now be a strong nation instead of having only four millions of souls in our midst. We would have a population of nine or ten millions, and instead of being afraid of invasion the people of the United States would be pleased to think during their internecine war that such was the peaceful character and orderly disposition of Her Majesty's Colonies in America that there was no danger to be apprehended from them.

I believe there is no time that a parent knows the value of the child he loves until he hears the cold earth falling upon the coffin, and the sad words, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Let England transfer this little province to the United States, and she will, after a few years' time, wake up to the loss she has sustained. If the people of the United States succeed in restoring the union, in healing the differences between the North and the South, and in concentrating their tremendous energies, she must become one of the greatest powers of the world. She is now a great naval power, but give her the harbour of Halifax,—which in her hands could be made just as impregnable as Gibraltar. Give her the coal, iron, and fisheries of Nova Scotia, and her power will be largely increased, and millions of people will pour into this country. The fisheries alone of these provinces would be to the United States a nursery for a million or a million and a half of seamen. How long would England then boast of her maritime supremacy? When the Americans had only a few miserable ships they brought more disgrace upon the British flag than any

other nation ever succeeded in doing. What would they be if, when challenged to the test by Great Britain, they had possession of the Colonies in addition to their ordinary strength? Suppose in the order of things France, another great naval power, should combine her energies with those of the United States, against England, in what position would the mother country be? How could she contend with such maritime nations as these? Therefore the loss of these Colonies might lead to the degradation of England, and instead of standing at the head of nations she might be lowered to the condition of a secondary state, if indeed she were not converted into a province of France.

I shall now very briefly call the attention of the House to the resolutions before it. They develop the arguments on which we ask for a repeal of the Union. The first clause contends that the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia had no power to change the constitution; they had none except what was given them in the charter. Parliament had no power over this country—it never had any. This country belonged to the Queen of England, and our Assembly had no constitutional right to consent to or make the slightest alteration in the constitution under which they were elected to make laws. That is the position which we take, and I would like to see the British constitutional authorities examine this subject, for I am convinced they will acknowledge that I am correct. The second resolution is to the effect that the only authority which the Delegates had was derived from the Assembly, who had no power to give any such authority at all. Even this authority, however, they disregarded. Their authority simply extended to the negotiation of the terms of a Federal union between all the British North American Colonies. They had no power to select three provinces and confederate them, and therefore in that respect they did not act up to their authority. Then, sir, their delegation was not legally constituted. If I gave a power of Attorney to A. B. and C. to transact business for me, A. and B. cannot do it without C., unless I make it optional for them to do it jointly or severally; but if I authorize three men jointly to execute a deed for me, or do any other act, any two of them cannot legally perform the duty. If the House of Assembly authorized a delegation to be constituted, consisting of an equal number of men from Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Prince Edward's Island, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia, the delegates had no power to act unless this stipulation was carried out. No constituent assembly was constituted—it could make no constitution, or do any act until all the delegates were present. If there were 5 from one province and 6 from another, the whole proceeding was a nullity, because the delegation was not constituted according to their instructions. Then again they were told that they were to make just provision for the rights and interests of Nova Scotia. How did they do that? They gave the whole province away. We had a well-working constitution; we made our own laws, raised our own revenues, and taxed ourselves. We owned railways, fisheries, and