

sheet at their fair market value. It seems astonishing to us that the Directors should ever have deviated from this course. No business man would for a moment dream in making up his balance sheet of considering "greenbacks" as cash at their face value, but would without a moment's hesitation write them down at the rate of the day. Perhaps the Great Western people had to a certain extent, faith in the resumption of specie payments by the United States, and although they did convert a portion of their American funds, they still retained an amount gradually accumulating year by year, for which some day they would receive gold at par. There is another way of accounting for their calling funds worth only 65c to 74c cash, which is still less creditable to the Directors, namely: that thereby they were enabled to declare dividends in excess of earnings, and still were able to carry forward a balance each six months. Thus on the 31st January, 1868, a balance of £2,725 was carried forward after payment of dividend. Now, at that time, there was on hand the sum of \$143,517, the loss on conversion of which would have been about £9 500, leaving a large deficiency instead of the delusive surplus of £2,725. We trust the Directors of the Great Western Railway will have the good sense to follow the course suggested by the auditors, and that even if they desire to hold United States funds on the chance of their becoming more valuable, they will not treat them in the accounts as if they already were at par.

The half year to which the report refers appears to have been an exceptionally unfortunate one, the proof of which is found in a comparison of the traffic receipts of subsequent months this year with the corresponding periods of last year; and we hope to be able to chronicle, at the end of the current half-year, a very large increase in all items of traffic. The late Provincial Exhibition at Hamilton attracted large numbers, and the trains on the Great Western, both regular and extra, ran filled to their utmost capacity, so that for one week, at all events, there must have been a very handsome increase in receipts. The road is in splendid order, and the rolling stock abundant, and there is every prospect of an increasing prosperity.

THE NOVA SCOTIA QUESTION.

THE most prominent and the wisest of the statesmen of the Province of Nova Scotia, is we think without question the Hon. Joseph Howe. Whatever our private opinion may be on the subject of the repeal agitation and the opposition to Confederation in which he has taken so prominent a part we cannot withhold our testimony to his ability, his breadth of view, and the honesty of his purpose. He has been the foremost in demanding repeal of a union which he believed to have been at the last moment forced on the Province by a legislature which on that subject did not truly represent the people by whom they were elected; he has been unwearied in his opposition to this union in every constitutional way, but hitherto he has refrained, prudently and carefully refrained from saying one word which bore a trace of disloyalty to the Queen, of whose dominions Nova Scotia after all was a part or from giving utterance to one expression which might be tortured into approval by him of the anti-British sentiments of a small but violent section of the repeal party. Mr. Howe in fact has been so reticent that some of his own party have feared, many of his political opponents have hoped, that he was about to throw his weight into the scale against those in concert with whom he had as yet been acting. He has now broken through this reserve, and in a letter to the *Eastern Chronicle*, New Glasgow, lays down what he believes to be the true course for Nova Scotians to adopt at the present crisis of their affairs, or rather points at the three peaceful courses from which they may make choice.

This letter is preceded by a brief correspondence between Mr. Howe and a Nova Scotian resident of Washington. The latter, referring to certain telegrams to New York papers implying the defection of Mr. Howe and another prominent repealer from their party, writes to Mr. Howe to ask if this be true, and receives the following reply:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—In answer to your letter I may say, that up to this hour I have accepted nothing inconsistent with the general tenor of my life. I am dealing with the difficulties around me with a single eye to the good of my country, but let me add that treason and filibustering expeditions to tear the

"Provinces to pieces are not included in my programme."

"Yours, &c.,

"JOSEPH HOWE."

Mr. Howe then, in his letter to the *Eastern Chronicle*, referring to the letters of its Washington correspondent, shews how very bravely an *ex Nova Scotian*, writing in all security, without any possibility of suffering from the effects of endeavouring to carry out his suggestions, may counsel his countrymen to resist the Imperial authorities, defy the Imperial power, and seek for the settlement of all their troubles in annexation to the United States. But, asks Mr. Howe, "How will it be with the Nova Scotian at home? Unless he can overthrow the Government, while it lasts, he must, after committing himself to treasonable correspondence or intrigues, live under suspicion and reproach. If he resists the power of the Crown, he must take his life in his hand, and be prepared, if he fails, for the ordinary penalties of treason, which men in all ages and in all countries encounter, whether the cause be good or bad. Imprisonment or banishment are the milder forms; the rope and the fusillade are the sterner alternatives."

Mr. Howe next briefly refers to his efforts to obtain a repeal of the union, and his failure, opposed as he was by "so formidable a combination." He would have been justified, he says, when he returned from England twice defeated, in laying down his arms; and had he done so and frankly accepted the situation, his honour would have been as untarnished as that of the unsuccessful soldier. But, he goes on to say, he has not laid down his arms, nor accepted the situation, but is still labouring in the interests of his country to make the best of a bad business, and to recover what he can out of the wreck that has been made of their provincial organization. He then states that there are three peaceful courses open to Nova Scotia.

"First, an appeal to the new Government and Parliament of England; second, an attempt to revive the old scheme of a union of the Maritime Provinces; and third, negotiation with the Canadians for a re-adjustment of the terms upon which Nova Scotia was forced into Confederation."

We need hardly say that of the three alternatives, we believe the last to be the wisest for our fellow colonists to pursue, and we are confident if they can show to the satisfaction of the other three Provinces that they are suffering injustice, or that their interests are not sufficiently considered, that they will be met with every desire to make right what is now wrong; and that, while not offering to Nova Scotia any bribe to induce her to remain in the union, her present partners will be quite ready to do all that can in fairness be asked of them.

On the subject of throwing off allegiance to the Queen, Mr. Howe expresses himself very plainly and positively. He does not believe, in the first place, that if Nova Scotians were united to a man in desiring aid from the United States, at the cost of a war between that country and England, that such aid would be given them. The present generation in the United States have had enough of war, which has devastated vast tracts of country, carried cripples into every street, mourning into every hamlet, and heavy taxation into every house. And in the next place, any attempt to wrest Nova Scotia from Great Britain either with or without the assistance of the United States, would bring calamities upon them fearful to contemplate, and ruin their country for at least one generation.

"Let us hear no more, then," writes Mr. Howe, in conclusion, "of fanciful projects and impossible remedies, whether they come from imprudent people in our midst, or good natured friends beyond the borders. Nova Scotians have established some reputation for common sense; let us exert it, attempting only the possible. The future is in the hands of God, who has tried and may yet try us severely. Let us not forget His protection by follies akin to madness, but set resolutely about, each in his own way and according to his gifts, the work that remains to be done, and that we can attempt without dishonour."

It appears to us that the anti-confederates (meaning not the violent men, who as a rule are better informed, but the rank and file of the party, who have been misled by their leaders,) have fallen into the grave error of believing that the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec have taken in and humbugged Nova Scotia; that to the former was all the gain, to the latter nothing but

loss. They seem to fancy that we, old Canadians, could by no possibility desire to enter into a confederation from which resulted to us no material advantages, and the value of which could not be reckoned in dollars and cents. It passes belief that we could be carried away by mere sentiment, or that we could be enthusiastic over the idea of a union of the Provinces simply because it would make us the citizens of a great Dominion, instead of merely an isolated, although leading, colony in British North America. We affirm, nevertheless, and we believe what we affirm to be strictly true, that three-fourths of the advocates of a confederation in the old Province of Canada were desirous of a union with the Maritime Provinces, not that they might have personal gain, nor from any expectation of Provincial aggrandisement, but almost entirely because in such union they looked for greater strength and a higher standing in the list of nations. So far, we have not been able to discover in what single form material benefit has accrued to Ontario and Quebec by this union, which, notwithstanding, we trust will never again be divided. For whose benefit will the money for the Intercolonial Railway be expended, and to whom will that Railway prove the greatest boon? That part of the Dominion lying west of Quebec certainly will not derive most advantage from it, and yet it is by that very most populous portion that the largest share of the cost of the Intercolonial will ultimately have to be paid, principal as well as interest; for we have no idea that for many years to come there will be anything but loss in the working of that road.

Another mistake the anti-confederates make in thinking and speaking of the union. They altogether ignore the fact that the Dominion includes Nova Scotia or even New Brunswick, and think that its prosperity can only be obtained at the expense of those Maritime Provinces, which have been sacrificed for the benefit of Canadians. Now it seems strange that we should feel elated at being joined to Provinces so much inferior to ourselves in wealth and population, and yet that Nova Scotia should not be possessed with some similar sentiment on being asked to form one of the partnership. She, certainly, by becoming a portion of the Dominion, has received a greater access of national dignity and importance than old Canada has done, and yet her citizens are blind to the fact, and actually conceive that they have been robbed of their liberties, with no corresponding gain to set against that great loss.

Of course, we expect that it will be said that we write, looking at the subject from a Canadian point of view, and that our judgment is blinded by our prejudices; but we think we have always, since this Journal was first started, taken an independent stand on subjects; we have never allowed ourselves to be unduly influenced by local or sectional interests, but have at all times written in support of what we conscientiously believed to be best for the country at large; we have never interfered in any way in party politics, but have fearlessly censured the public acts of public men, when we believed those acts to be contrary to the general welfare. We therefore feel entitled to ask that our readers in Nova Scotia will give us credit at least for sincerity in what we have now or at any other time written on the vexed question of the day, and in saying further that we, in common, we believe, with all the people of Quebec and Ontario, notwithstanding much abuse of us in many Nova Scotian newspapers, entertain none but the most friendly sentiments towards all our fellow colonists on this continent, and that we hope the day will soon come when these sentiments will not be all on the one side.

NEW METHOD OF MAKING GAS.—A new method of making gas has been discovered in Scotland, which is said to be a great improvement on the present method. Mr. McKenzie is the inventor and has already taken out patents for his invention in England, Canada, and the United States. The *modus operandi* is to grind any kind of bituminous coal, and mix it with crude petroleum till it is of the consistency of paste. The whole then becomes equal to the best canal coal for gas making. Gas manufactured in this way gives a light from an ordinary burner equal to twenty-four candles, being double the light given by ordinary gas. The standard of gas in Great Britain is about 25 to 30 candles, the light being pure and free from odor, whereas the gas manufactured here does not equal half a dozen candles, and is offensive and unwholesome as all gases of a low illuminating power necessarily must be. In this country, therefore, the new invention of Mr. McKenzie is just what is required. Its introduction would lead to a much greater utilization of the vast quantities of crude petroleum which Canada produces, and which is sold in the market at little more than a nominal price.