

social intercourse with other States and Provinces may be secured : and they are willing, whenever their own coast and harbours are safe, to aid Her Majesty's forces to preserve from aggression the Provinces in the rear.

But they view with profound distrust and apprehension schemes, recently propounded, by which it is proposed to transfer to the people of Canada the control of the Government, Legislation, and Revenues of this loyal and happy Province, and they venture respectfully to crave from your Honourable House justice and protection :

That the Province of Canada lies as far from Nova Scotia as Austria does from England, and there exists no reason why a people who live at such a distance, with whom we have but little commerce, who have invested no capital in our country, who are unable to protect it, and are themselves shut out from ocean navigation by frost for five months of the year, should control our Legislation and Government :

That in 1864 the Government of Nova Scotia, without any authority from the Legislature, and without any evidence of the consent of the people, sent delegates to Canada to arrange in secret conference at Quebec a political union between the various Provinces. That these delegates concealed the result of their conference from the people until it became incidentally made public in another Province, and that, to this hour, they have never unfolded portions of the scheme having the most essential relation to the peculiar interests and local government of Nova Scotia subsequent to Confederation.

That the scheme, when at last made public, was received with great dissatisfaction in Nova Scotia ; that the opposition to it has been constantly on the increase, and has been intensified by the conduct of the Government and the delegates, who now propose to call in the aid of your Honourable House to assist them to overthrow, by an arbitrary exercise of power, free institutions enjoyed for a century and never abused :

That the objections of the people to the proposed Confederation scheme affect not merely minor local details, but the radical principles of the plan. The people cannot recognize the necessity for change in their present tranquil, prosperous, and free condition. They cannot believe that the proposed Confederation with the distant Colony (Canada) will prove of any practical benefit, either for defence or trade ; while, from the past history of that country, its sectional troubles, its eccentric political management and financial embarrassments, they have great reason to fear that Confederation would be to them a most disastrous change, retarding their progress, and rendering their prolonged connexion with the Crown precarious if not impossible. Forming, as she does now, a portion of the Empire, Nova Scotia is already confederated with fifty other States and Provinces, enjoys free trade with two hundred and fifty millions of people living under one flag and owning the authority of one Sovereign. She has no desire to part with her self control, or to narrow her commercial privileges, by placing herself under the dominion of a Sister Colony, with an exposed frontier, frostbound for a third of the year, and with no navy to defend the Maritime Provinces when her ports are open.

The scheme of government framed at Quebec is unlike any other that history shows to have been successful. It secures neither the consolidation, dignity, and independent power of monarchy, nor the checks and guards which ensure to the smaller States self-government and controlling influence over the Federal authorities in the neighbouring Republic. By adopting the federal principle, sectionalism in the five Provinces is perpetuated ; by the timid and imperfect mode in which that principle is applied the people, whose minds have been unsettled by this crude experiment, may be driven to draw contrasts and nourish aspirations of which adventurous and powerful neighbours will not be slow to take advantage ; and the people of Nova Scotia have no desire to peril the integrity of the Empire, with the blessings they now enjoy, or to try new experiments, which may complicate foreign relations, and yet add no real strength to the Provinces it is proposed to combine.

The people object also to the financial arrangements, as especially burdensome and unfair to this Province. Having long enjoyed the control and benefited by the expenditure of their own revenues, they cannot approve a scheme that will wrest the greater part of these from their hands, to keep up costly and cumbrous federal machinery, and to meet the liabilities of Canada.

For many years the commercial policy of Nova Scotia has been essentially different from that of Canada. The latter country, partly from necessity arising out of financial embarrassments, and partly as an indirect premium on her own manufactures, has adopted a tariff varying from 20 to 30 per cent. on imported goods.

Almost surrounded, as Nova Scotia is, by the ocean, her people are favourably situated for enjoying free commercial intercourse with every section of the British Empire and with those foreign countries open to her commerce by the enlightened policy of the Parent State : of this privilege she has availed herself by imitating, as far as local circumstances would permit, the liberal and free trade policy of the Mother Country—ten per cent. being the ad valorem duty collected under the Nova Scotia tariff on goods imported into the Province. The proposed scheme of union will give Canada, by her large preponderance in the Legislature, the power to shape the tariff for the whole Confederacy according to her inland ideas and necessities, so as to levy the same onerous duties on British goods imported into Nova Scotia as are now exacted by Canada.

That since the Confederation scheme has been announced there have been special parliamentary elections in three out of the eighteen counties of this Province, and in all three it has been condemned at the polls.

That in 1865 the scheme was condemned at nearly every public meeting held by the delegates to discuss it, and numerous petitions against its adoption were presented to the Provincial Parliament, and only one in its favour, until the leader of the Government declared the measure to be "impracticable."

That at the opening of the late session no reference to Confederation was made in the speech of the Lieutenant Governor, and down to a late period the people of Nova Scotia were led to believe that the scheme had been abandoned. A resolution was introduced towards the close of the session, clothing the Government with power to appoint delegates, who, in connexion with delegates from the other Provinces, are to frame a scheme of government ; to which it is proposed to ask the sanction of your Honourable House before it has been submitted to the Legislature that it may annihilate, or to the people whose legal and constitutional rights and powers it may transfer or circumscribe.