

English statesmen thought it would be small loss if Canada were severed from the mother country.

It is impossible to do more in these pages than quote a few sentences from some of the more prominent advocates of Confederation, and to give a very brief sketch of their lives. The speeches of those who opposed Confederation are withheld because our space is limited.

II.—A Few Quotations from Speeches.

(a) The Hon George Brown.—Speaking at Halifax in 1864, the Hon. Mr. Brown, then president of the Executive Council of Canada, said:

“Our sole object in coming here is to say to you: We are about to amend our constitution; and before finally doing so, we invite you to enter with us frankly and earnestly into the inquiry, whether it would or would not be for the advantage of all the British American Colonies to be embraced under one political system. Let us look the whole question steadily in the face. If we find it advantageous, let us act upon it; but if not, let the whole thing drop.

“It ought not to excite any surprise that the federation of all the British North American Provinces is at last presented to us as a practical question. The subject has often and again been discussed in the press and in parliament; but at no time has any provincial statesman ever expressed a doubt that the fitting future of these colonies was, to be united under one government and legislature, under the sovereignty of Great Britain.

“I am persuaded there never was a moment in the history of these colonies when the hearts of our people were so firmly attached to the parent state by the ties of gratitude and affection, as at this moment; and for one I hesitate not to say, that did this movement for colonial union endanger the connection that has so long and so happily existed, it would have my firm opposition. But, far from fearing such a result, a due consideration of the matter must satisfy every one that the more united we are, the stronger will we be; and the

stronger we are, the less trouble we will give the Imperial government, the more advantageous will be our commerce, and the more proud they will be of us as a portion of the empire. Our relation to the mother country does not, therefore, enter into the question. Whether the right time for a general union has arrived, must be determined by a close examination into the present position of all the provinces, and the possibility of such an arrangement being matured as will be satisfactory to all concerned. And that has been the work in which the conference has been engaged for two weeks past. We have gone earnestly into the consideration of the question in all its hearings, and our unanimous conclusion is, that if terms of union fair to all and acceptable to all could be devised, a union of all the British American provinces would be highly advantageous to every one of the provinces. In the first place, from the attitude of half a dozen inconsiderable colonies, we would rise at once to the position of a great and powerful state.

“Let me, however, wind up with this, that were the provinces all united tomorrow, they would have an annual export trade of no less than \$65,000,000, and an import traffic to an equal amount; they would have 2,500 miles of railway; telegraph wires extending to every city and town throughout the country, and an annual government revenue of nearly \$13,000,000. It needs no special wisdom to perceive that a state presenting such resources, and offering such varied and lucrative employment to the immigrant and capitalist, would at once occupy a high position, and attract to it the marked attention of other countries. It would be something to be a citizen of such a state. Heretofore we have been known as separate colonies, and the merits and disadvantages of each compared and set off against the other; but with union the advantages of each would pertain to the whole—a citizen of one would be a citizen of all—and the foreign emigrant would come with very