

paces, diversities of interest, or the defects of a paper constitution, that great country, endowed by the Creator with boundless fertility, with natural forests and rich fisheries, with motive power that no skill can measure, with mines that generations cannot exhaust, has just buried a million of people, slain in civil strife, or worn out by the casualties of war.

Half a million of maimed and broken men wander through her towns, every branch of her industry is burthened with debt and taxation, and the Legislature and Government, in fierce antagonism, are tearing to pieces the paper constitution in which they can find no remedy for the evils that afflict them. With all these evidences before us that Union is not always strength, and that paper constitutions are not really durable, the undersigned would respectfully submit, whether it would not be wise to pause, at least till we can see how our neighbours remodel their institutions, before we begin tampering with our own.

We are sometimes told that the Saxons were weak under the Heptarchy and stronger when united under a king. This is true, and if the people of Nova Scotia were divided into tribes, under rival chieftains, it would be wise for them to follow so good an example. But let us suppose that the Saxons had been united in one Parliament, with one ruler and in friendly alliance with the most powerful monarchy of those days, and that the French had come over to persuade them to remove the Wittenagemot to Paris, to submit to taxation without restraint, and to allow them to appoint all their principal officers, what answer would our sturdy ancestors have given? their old war cry of "bills and bows;" and if Her Majesty's Government will leave us free to give the same answer to the Canadians, when they make us the same proposition, this question will be speedily settled, without their interference.

The Normans conquered England at last, and again our own history teaches us lessons of wisdom. So long as these two countries were united they scourged and impoverished each other; and it was not until little England had her own Sovereign and Parliament secure within her own borders, free from foreign entanglements and influences, that she began to develop those physical, intellectual, and industrial resources, which have made her the wonder of the world. We have great respect for the million of Frenchmen in Lower Canada, who live about six times as far from us as Normandy is from England; but yet warned by this page of ancient history, we would much prefer that they should govern themselves and let us alone. Our country is small, but the sea is large enough, and we will take our share of it, and carve out a noble heritage for our children, as Englishmen did before us.

The advocates of this measure often refer its opponents to the Scottish and Irish Acts of Union; but assuming the necessity to be as urgent and the cases analogous, which they are not, the Union of the Three Kingdoms would only prove that the Maritime Provinces might at some time hereafter be drawn together by some simple arrangements mutually satisfactory.

Those Provinces are larger than the Three Kingdoms; their population is homogeneous; their interests are the same.

The people of these Islands did not connect themselves with a large continental country that could always out-vote them, and which, having no power to protect them, might yet drain their resources and hamper their trade. Why should we?

The undersigned have no desire to be drawn into vexed questions of Scottish and Irish politics, but would with all respect invite the attention of Her Majesty's ministers to these marked distinctions. Ireland was a conquered country long before the union, and the sister island, being the strongest, had perhaps the right to settle her form of government. The Canadians have never conquered the Maritime Provinces, and have acquired no such right. Had the principles of government been as well understood sixty years ago as they are now, had the Irish Parliament represented the whole body of the people, and been content, as Nova Scotia is, to work responsible government in due subordination to the Crown and Parliament of England, who can say that the Act of Union would ever have been thought of, or that she would not have been a thousand times more happy and prosperous without it? But assuming the union to have been a wise measure, then we should be careful to avoid the errors by which it was marred at the outset, and which have caused irritation and disturbance ever since. The Irish union was carried by means which even the necessity can hardly justify, and a rankling sense of unfair play in the mode has underlain the whole politics of Ireland ever since. The measure ought to have some redeeming features, but seeing that it has led to two or three rebellions, that the country has been more than half a century in a state of chronic insurrection, that hundreds of thousands have died of famine, and that millions of Irishmen emigrate, to render our relations with a great country perilous, while those who