

the door and to walk off with the key. But our jobbers had not sense enough to bolt the door,—they were in such a hurry to enjoy the fruits of confederation, that they did not take time to think how the thing should be done, but after shutting us into limbo, the arrant stupidities walked off leaving the door ajar and the key sticking in the lock,—we will certainly, therefore open the door and walk out. By the mercy of Heaven we fell into the hands of men who did not know what they were about. The hon. member for Inverness cited what I called a somewhat doubtful political character in Peel, who, as I stated before had eminent qualities but the one terrible blemish which I mentioned. If he wanted to find a model I would recommend him to go to Ireland. England never was in the position of the Colonies,—she never had such occasion to produce model statesmen of the cast of those I have referred to but Ireland was in that condition,—she had been robbed of her Constitution and had produced some men who were more worthy of imitation than Sir Robert Peel. If he had taken Daniel O'Connell he would have chosen for his model an honorable and patriotic statesman—a man who loved his country from his cradle to his grave, spending the whole of his most valuable life in contending to get back the constitution of which she was robbed, and a man who died advocating nobly the cause of Ireland's liberty. He was the equal of Sir Robert Peel in ability; as a man and a statesman he was his superior. He also was an orator, and as a patriot he had no equal; and he went down to an honored grave. If I were to make any model, I would choose such a man as that, rather than one who having forfeited the character of a steady and consistent statesman, descended into an inglorious grave. If this country were unsuccessful in obtaining repeal, she would be much in the condition of Ireland; and I ask, does the hon. member for Inverness wish to see us in that position? Does he wish to see in Nova Scotia generation after generation of discontented subjects?

In reference to the treatment which we have received at the hands of the British Government I must draw a contrast by no means flattering to that Government. If we take up the file of the despatches, we shall see with what care, correctness and impartiality the Ministers of George II. treated Nova Scotia when Governor Lawrence thought he could do very well without an Assembly. They said "the King had pledged his royal word to Nova Scotia that its people should have a House of Assembly on the model of the British House of Commons, and we command you forthwith to summon the House." The Governor made various excuses—he thought he could do very well without the Assembly; but they answer him, "We command you to execute the royal promises, because we will not have those promises forfeited." They told him that this command was the last instruction he was to receive. That is the way in which this country was treated in those days; but how have the Ministers of Queen Victoria treated this Province? I am sorry to say a word to the prejudice of those great men, and I am willing to believe that, being doubtful of the confidence of the House of Commons, they had enough to engage their thoughts at home without looking into the affairs of the Colonies. I am willing to make every excuse for the Imperial Ministers,—they were told, it is true, by persons from this country, whom they mistook for gentlemen, that Nova Scotia most anxiously desired to be confederated, and that the scheme would be satisfactory to all concerned. But I must pause here and make this observation. In a matter of such transcendental importance, involving the fate of this, the noblest portion of the Empire, these men are chargeable with gross negligence,—they should not have been satisfied with the word of any man, but should have so framed the Act of Union that the people and legislature of this country would have been consulted upon its details. They should have sent it out with a suspending clause to prevent its coming into operation until the people had been heard at the polls, and our Parliaments had ratified it clause by clause. They are chargeable, I say, with negligence in not doing so, and if they are compelled, from the necessity of their position, to draw back and revise their steps—to admit the soundness of the arguments which I am using to-day as to the invalidity and unconstitutionality of that Act, they must get up in Parliament and state that they were wrong. I have such an opinion of the high-mindedness and integrity of that administration, that I believe they will embrace the earliest opportunity of making reparation to the people of Nova Scotia, whose rights they have treated with too much indifference.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask what the condition of this country would be if we accepted confederation. We would be absolutely at the disposal of the Canadian Parliament. They can tax unlimitedly the people of Nova Scotia, excepting that they cannot put a tax upon land. They took our railroads, our fisheries, our public buildings and our revenues, but were kind enough not to take Nova Scotia itself up to Canada, they had the kindness to make that exception. That would be the condition of this country, and let me ask who are the Canadians that the noble and loyal people of Nova Scotia should be made subject to them? What temptation have we to enter into a confederation with them? Has Nova Scotia ever forfeited her constitution by rebellion? Has the blood of Englishmen ever discolored her soil? Can Canada give the same answer to these questions that we can give? Did not Canada rebel against the British authority? Did not the Canadians slay British soldiers on their soil. Did they not stone, murder and mutilate a British officer while in the discharge of his duty; and does not the innocent blood of that officer, like