

confidence in its justice, and our anxiety to meet its wishes. I therefore ask the leader of the Government, and through him the advocates of the Quebec scheme, whether they are so wedded to that scheme as to be unable to entertain the proposition I, as a friend of Colonial Union, now frankly make?

I will not deny, that the extraordinary reaction that has taken place in New Brunswick in regard to Union, and the admitted partiality of a large majority of the people of Nova Scotia for the abstract principle, coupled with the firm but constitutional pressure of the Imperial authorities, afford grounds to apprehend that before very long the Quebec Resolutions may be carried in the Maritime Provinces. The object of my present movement is—and I fearlessly avow it—to defeat the Quebec scheme. Before it is too late, before we are borne down by the powerful influences against which we are now contending; while yet we have, so to speak, a formidable army in the field; while our opponents respect our strength and hesitate at an engagement, is it not wise to seek the most advantageous terms of compromise? Men of extreme views, men who desire to make this great subject a stalking horse on which to ride into office—in short, individuals “with other ends to serve”—may condemn the course I have taken, but no one values the censure or approval of such men. I shall lose nothing in severing my connection with them, while I feel my conduct will be generally sustained by the intelligent portion of my countrymen. But I do confess, that this step may sever me politically and personally from some gentlemen, sincere in their opposition to all union, whom I respect, and whose friendship I value. I shall regret it, but must frankly say I desire to maintain no connexion, I am prepared to throw away any friendship, that can only be preserved at the sacrifice of my convictions. If I have been marked for anything while I have been in this Assembly, it has been for independence of action, and

fearlessness in the expression of my thoughts. I have never acknowledged allegiance to any leader or party in this House. I have never attended a party caucus in my life. Among the gentlemen I address, no one within the past two years has come more frequently into keen collision, here and elsewhere, with the occupants of the Treasury Benches than myself. I am certainly indebted to these gentlemen for no favors, and I can point to more than one act of personal or political injustice received at their hands. But, sir, I would be unworthy of my position in this Legislature, if I could allow considerations of this nature, on one side or the other, to control my action in the presence of a question of the highest magnitude. I will not deny, that I have some ambition as a public man, but my highest ambition will be gratified if I can contribute an humble stone to the edifice of Colonial Union. Before, however, I can yield any assistance to the builders, the model of the proposed structure must be altered, and the whole design undergo the revision of an architect in whom I have confidence.

Sir, the hostility I have all along evinced to the Quebec scheme of Confederation has frequently been attributed to a desire to defeat the Government, and thus promote my own political prospects. I trust that the course I have this day taken will be a sufficient answer to this charge. If such were my desire, my end would be most certainly attained, in the present wide-spread hostility to that scheme, by maintaining the position I have occupied for the last eighteen months, without committing myself to any proposal for the solution of our difficulties. But as an avowed Unionist, such a course would be indefensible, and I am not willing to pursue any course I cannot defend. Nor do I seek any temporary triumph over my political opponents at the expense of the highest interests of my country. If the Government be animated by sentiments of moderation, justice and