

hold it to be a duty every representative owes to his constituents and to the country, to say something on a question the most vitally important that has ever been debated on these floors. My speech shall have one merit at least. It shall be short. I am a great admirer of short speeches, although I know it is common to hear public speakers and their friends boast that they had spoken for two or three or more hours. The hearer's attention is very apt to flag after listening about half-an-hour, and what follows is very likely to spoil the effect of the whole. I may say at the outset that I entirely approve of the Resolutions before the House. I have carefully conned them over, and can find little or no fault either with the sentiment or the language. They express in a plain and forcible style the feelings, the hopes, and the aspirations of the great majority of the people of Nova Scotia.

Why has this hateful connection been forced and fastened upon us? I think I can give some of the reasons. Canada wanted us. She was in trouble; she could not reconcile the adverse and conflicting sections of her population; she needed our aid to strengthen the dominant party; she wanted us to help pay the interest on her debts, and to help her fight her battles. They had tried separation and Union, and many other experiments, and ended by coming to a dead lock. Another reason was that certain leading and ambitious men of this and the sister provinces thought they saw in this measure the means of securing to themselves a higher position, a larger sphere, greater honors and emoluments than this little province could offer. They cared not for their country; they were willing to barter away its rights for their own aggrandisement. I am sure these designing men must have seen that this measure could not possibly be for the public good. No sane man, who is not blinded by interest or prejudice could, on calm reflection, see anything in it but public calamity. They hoped to affect their purposes by the junction of the two great parties that have hitherto alternately swayed the destinies of the provinces.

Another reason is to be sought, I fear, in the position of the Mother Country. It seems clear, too clear, that Great Britain would be glad to solve the question, how she could honorably get rid of us. I regret to be compelled to admit this, but I think it cannot be denied, looking at the speeches of her statesmen in and out of Parliament, the outspoken opinion of a large and respectable portion of the press, and the general tone of public sentiment, that this is a just and fair conclusion. If England really desired to retain this Province, our case would have received more consideration when brought before the two Houses of Parliament. It is probable she is beginning to perceive we are more trouble than we are worth, and think this Confederation scheme, whether it may bring good or evil to us she cares not, will serve as a decent pretext to cut us adrift. Another reason why Britain is willing to part with us, is the difficulty of defending us. We are utterly unable to defend ourselves. These colonies are like a string of beads, strung along the borders of a great and powerful nation,

which can swallow us up at any moment. The shrewd politicians of the old country fully understand that in case of war how impossible it would be to defend us at a distance of 3000 miles against an enemy with a million fighting men trained to arms, capable of being increased to five millions, possessing ample means, and all the activity, energy and sagacity of the Anglo-Saxon race. They know full well such a contest could have but the one result—defeat and dishonor. We are the weak spot of the Empire. The great Indian territory, surrounded by weak neighbors, with its millions of native soldiers, is capable, with very little aid, of self defence. The insular position of the great Pacific Colonies, Australia, New Zealand, of Jamaica, the Mauritius, and the other eastern and western isles, makes their defence easy. The same may be said of the Cape Colony and her other African possessions, which cost but little anxiety or expense. It would seem, that in the selection and planting of colonies, England always kept a careful eye to the expense of their maintenance and their defence with the single exception of the North American Provinces, which were thrown upon her by the action of the United States loyalists, with scarcely the option of retaining or rejecting them. We can hardly wonder, then, that Englishmen think these North American Colonies are a nuisance and a bore; let us make a nation of them, and let them set up for themselves.

I now approach a tender point—I mean the sentiment called loyalty. For my own part, no man could be a more sincere admirer of the British institutions than myself. I have always sympathized with British armies and generals when at war—and with her noble statesmen, her politics and literature when at peace. What I have said of myself will very generally apply to nearly all the people of this Province. I do not presume a people better satisfied with their political, commercial and social condition existed on the face of the earth. I am afraid I must refer to this matter as one of the past. The facts stated have greatly changed the popular enthusiasm. I fear this intense feeling of loyalty begins to waver, and I must say I am not surprised at it.

Hon. SPEAKER—I must call you to order.

Dr. BROWN—I must speak my opinion plainly and distinctly. I think that loyalty should be reciprocal, and that loyalty to ourselves is the first great point. We should take care of ourselves, and Great Britain is as much bound to be loyal to us as we to her. Loyalty is often only another name for humbug and hypocrisy. If Great Britain is unwilling to take care of us we must only take care of ourselves. The learned Speaker has not called me to order, but has simply given me a gentle hint. In the House of Commons much broader language is used. We find Mr. Bright saying openly and distinctly, if it pleases Nova Scotia to go to the United States let her go. We find another—

Hon. SPEAKER—Mr. Bright may say very rude things in the British Parliament—he don't break any rule; but I do not think the hon. member would say that the people are disloyal now.