

have had some glimmering notion of the awkward dilemma in which the party would eventually find themselves. The more advanced spirits had already compromised themselves with disloyalty, and been tampered with by Americans and Annexationists. Such a course was repugnant both to his feelings and his reason, but he could not afford to do more than mildly deprecate it. "The old flag," he said, "must float above us still, and be revered and respected until we receive our answer from England." And what then? All he could say was that "a Council of War must be called."

It was with much interest that the meeting of the first Nova Scotian Legislature was awaited, and the speech of the Lieutenant-Governor was looked for, both in and outside of the Province, with greater curiosity than is usually excited by such perfunctory orations. Would the Executive Council put forth such pressure as would compel His Honour to endorse words and express opinions at variance with his own ideas, and indicative of hostility to the superior authority of which he was the representative? How could the change in the constitution be alluded to—and it could hardly escape mention—without the expression of an opinion favourable to one side or the other? A cautious, humdrum paragraph, in which the Lieutenant-Governor expressed his conviction that, if the loyal people of Nova Scotia desired any political changes, they would seek to attain them only by constitutional means, showed that at least His Honour had the power *not* to do things that he disliked. The Attorney-General immediately laid on the table of the Lower House a string of Resolutions, in which prolix and somewhat gratuitous assumption did duty largely for logic and law. Mr. Wilkins, judged by his words and deeds anent Confederation, must be a clever and versatile, if a somewhat unsafe, man. There is an evident originality about him, and he has, we believe, the reputation of being a good

speaker: but he is obviously careless as to facts, crotchety as to law, and inaccurate as to history. He inserts into a document claiming the dignity of a State Paper arguments that might pass muster in some special—*very* special—pleading, and while speaking as the Law Officer of the Crown, launches out into rhodomontade that might be not much out of place in a hustings speech. His lucubrations about Queen Anne's Charter, and his famous scheme for releasing Nova Scotia from Confederation by the potent agency of a five-cent Bill Stamp, will long be remembered, and the remembrance will always call up a smile. His "Resolutions" betrayed the weakness, not of the case, but of those who were to plead it.

As the Government did not command, and could not quite obtain a majority, in the Legislative Council, the "inevitable Delegation," in which a wearisome debate in the Lower House resulted, went to England, representing only the Commons of Nova Scotia. It consisted of Messrs. Howe, Annand, Troop and Smith. On arrival there it engaged counsel, by whom Mr. Wilkins' historical assertions and legal assumptions were pronounced unsound and untenable, and nothing more was heard of them. Hampered by their instructions, which bound them to accept nothing short of the Repeal of the Act of Union, and finding Repeal to be—as everybody but the House of Assembly knew beforehand—utterly unattainable, the Delegates found themselves in rather an awkward position. However, they obtained Mr. Bright's aid in bringing their case before the House of Commons, while Lord Stratheden ventilated it in the House of Lords. In the former—to cut a long story short—the motion for a Committee of Inquiry was rejected, if we remember right, by a majority of about 90: in the latter the motion was, after a debate, withdrawn. The Delegates fired a parting shot called "Nova Scotia's Protest," a paper which rather sacrificed dignity to pertness,