

cient time for the consideration even of so important a measure (Cheers); and I deny that in any degree, our Union owes its establishment, to intrigue or corruption, or coercion. (Cheers.) This, sir, seems now, necessary to be done before this debate closes because not confining himself to personal vindication, the honourable member opposite (Mr. Howe) has endeavoured even here to discredit and dishonour the men and the means by which this Union was carried, and his efforts in that direction are put very adroitly on the American market. Here Mr. McGee read an extract from the *New York Herald* of Saturday as to Mr. Howe's speech. I purposely refrain from all criticism on the honourable member's personal vindication. If he says now he did not mean what he said at Halifax in '64, after the Charlottetown Conference was called, or at Port Robinson in '62 when I stood by his side, what we all thought he then meant, what was corrected for the press by a hand which he only could control, and what he received without explanation, our congratulations on having said, I can only observe that I regret it; I deeply regret it. (Hear, hear.)

Who would not grieve if such a one there be  
Who would not blush if Atticus, were he?

But when the honourable gentleman goes farther than personal vindication—when he attempts to lay rude hands on this work of so many able and patriotic men, steadily prosecuted through several years, when he ventures to asperse the motives of our colleagues in this work and discredit the work itself—it is necessary that some Unionist, who knows all the facts, should rise before the close of this debate, to vindicate both the work and the workmen. (Cheers.) It will be remembered by all who hear me that the growth of this design in Canada was gradual and continuous. In '53 Sir Edmund Head, had promised in his speech, at the close of the Session to move the Imperial authorities. The same year, the honourable Minister of Militia, the honourable member for Sherbrooke, and the Hon. Mr. Ross, then in England, did actually so bring it; in 1859, the Canada Reform Convention declared in general terms, for the Federal principle; as a meeting of the Lower Canada Opposition, with which I at that time acted, also did, about the same period. In the other Provinces, especially in Nova Scotia, the movement was simultaneous with our own. In '61 the honourable member for Hants, (Mr. Howe) moved and the Legislature of Nova Scotia carried unanimously, the Union resolution read for us the other

[Mr. McGee (Montreal West)]

night, by the honourable member behind me, (Dr. Tupper.) I well remember in 1862 when the honourable member with one, who, I much regret for the sake of this House, is not now with us, (Mr. Archibald), the honourable minister near me (Mr. Tilley,) and other gentlemen from New Brunswick came to Quebec in relation to the Intercolonial Railroad, how much they regretted with me, that the then Government of Canada proper, headed by the honourable member for Cornwall, could not be induced to take up the question of Union. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) The honourable member said the other evening that he brought in his Union resolution to satisfy my esteemed friend, Mr. John Tobin, the former member for Halifax city; if so I am happy to know that Mr. Tobin had so much and such a salutary influence upon the honourable member; but he was not—I refer only to what I am personally a witness of—quite correct, as to what took place in consequence at Quebec. So far from "laughing over it for an hour," the joint meeting of ministers over which I had the honour to preside, listened for nearly that space to an ardent appeal from the honourable member to take up the Union question conjointly with the railroad, and when we who agreed with him found ourselves a minority, we consoled ourselves with the reflection, that the road would render the Union, bye and bye a necessity. (Loud cheers.) I mention these facts to show, that whoever else was taken by surprise by the design of a Canadian Union, the honourable member for Hants certainly was not, but though men may halt, or may drop off, events will not stand still; and accordingly in '64, we found that unexpectedly the prospects of Union, both east and west, had suddenly brightened up. Between March '62 and June '64, we had three unsuccessful Canadian administrations, a state of things which every one saw could not continue in this country. This led to Mr. Brown's Constitutional committee in the Session of '64, which proved rather a fiasco except that the Federal principle found increase of favour on both sides of the House; and this again led to the Canadian Coalition of the same summer, brought on in the first place by the disinterested interposition of the honourable members for Lanark and Compton, (Mr. Morris and Mr. Pope) and sanctioned by the honourable member for Cornwall, and the formal vote of the Opposition of that day. It has been urged against this Union as a corrupt taint in its very conception, that it was brought about so as to settle a chronic constitutional quarrel, between Upper and Lower