

of the lecture implied that responsible government was a delusion, that governors have too much power, that colonists were tied hand and foot to the chariot wheels of Downing street, that our statesmen were nobodies; that beyond the limits of their respective provinces they were unknown; that England snubbed us at every turn, and when she had a treaty to make with a foreign power the colonies were regarded with contempt, and their territories and fishing privileges taken away from them."

I will not weary the House with lengthy extracts, but I wish to direct attention briefly to the circumstances surrounding the political questions of that day, for I believe that such a view will shew the justice of the remarks which I have quoted. Dr. Tupper was fresh from a constitutional debate in which he imagined that the grievances were entirely on his side. I deny that at that time he had within his brain any practical idea about the Union of the Colonies, and if I am asked for the proof, I reply that immediately after delivering the lecture alluded to, he delivered a lecture to another audience in Portland, (St. John), not on a confederated Union of the Provinces as a whole, but on a legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces only. If he were consistent in the one lecture he was not in the other, and thus the remarks of the *News* are justified. It may seem out of place to refer to this matter, but it should be remembered that on these lectures has been based the argument that the people at the polls had taken the subject into consideration, which is not true. Much has been said on the constitutional branch of the argument, but as I not a lawyer, I cannot be expected to deal very fully with it. I would however direct the attention of that great constitutional lawyer the leader of the opposition, to the remarks of Mr. Adderley, in the House of Commons. Referring to an Act passed in the previous session, he said:

"In 1861 Nova Scotia took the lead in promoting the scheme of union, and was the first to propose that delegates should be sent to this country, to confer on the subject with the then Colonial Minister the Duke of Newcastle who promised that, if the desire of the colonies for the union were clearly made out the proposition would be taken into careful consideration by this country. He mentioned this circumstance, because it had been recently asserted that the Government at home had pressed this matter on reluctant colonies. In consequence of the Duke of Newcastle's reply to the proposal of the Legislature of Nova Scotia, that colony, together with the other maritime provinces, proposed at the end of 1864 to hold a conference, and then for the first time Canada came forward, asking to be permitted to form part of the conference. It was material that that fact should be borne in mind, because it had been stated that Canada had, for its own local purpose, urged the measure on the smaller provinces. It had been said that the difficulties of Canada had been the cause of the proposal for the union. It certainly was true that at that moment Canada had constitutional difficulties to contend with, but they were no more the cause of the proposition for the union of the provinces than the divorce of Henry VIII was the cause of the Reformation, though they might have been acts which precipitated what all desired."

I take it for granted that Mr. Adderley had in his mind the fact that the Colony had representative institutions, and therefore concluded that its people had a right to be consulted before their constitution was broken down. Some persons think that we had no right to discuss the propriety of the Union Act, but that we must take just whatever the

British Government may choose to give us. With all due deference to the wisdom and forethought of the statesmen who were engaged in the passage of the Act, I submit that we should be allowed to express an opinion upon the Act itself, and upon its details. I could refer back to shew that the policy of the British Government has not always been the best, and that they have made mistakes which they afterwards admitted. For example their policy towards the thirteen Colonies was not a wise one. Referring to the Confederation Act, I find in the clause respecting the Intercolonial Railway, something which goes to prove that the delegates exceeded their authority under the resolution of our legislature. This clause appears in the Act as the consideration in a bond, and is as follows:—

"Inasmuch as the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have joined in a Declaration that the construction of the Intercolonial Railway is essential to the consolidation of the Union of British North America, and to the assent thereto of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and have consequently agreed that provision should be made for its immediate construction by the Government of Canada. Therefore, in order to give effect to that agreement, it shall be the duty of the Government and Parliament of Canada to provide for the commencement, within six months after the Union, of a railway connecting the River St. Lawrence with the city of Halifax in Nova Scotia, and for the construction thereof with out intermission, and the completion thereof, with all practicable speed."

It would appear from that that the delegates accepted the terms which they got in consideration of the railway, and if we leave that clause out the inference is that their assent would not have been given. No person authorized the delegates to make the railway the consideration for Union—before they did so some one must have had the right to be consulted, and the question is who should it have been? I answer that in my belief the people, whose destinies were in the hands of these men, whose interests for weal or for woe were to be affected, should have had an opportunity of adjudicating on the whole matter. But it is urged by many that because certain leading men were in favor of Confederation, therefore there was necessity for consulting the people. With all respect for the learning and discretion of the members of the learned professions who favor Union, I take it for granted that they can hardly claim to be able to judge of what our farming interests require, so well as the 48,000 farmers, head of families, do know what is likely to affect their interests as well as doctors and lawyers. Again, would you exclude the 16,000 mechanics of this Province, the merchants, and all those who represent the industry, trade and commerce of the country from saying what affects their interests? Would you take from our 15,000 fishermen the right to have their voice in a matter so deeply affecting their welfare? Must the rights of all these classes be disposed of upon the *ipse dixit* of a few individuals, however learned and intelligent they may be? Responsibility in this matter must attach to somebody, and who was it that prevented the people from being consulted? Who were the men who were bold enough to take hold of the constitution and stifle the voice of the