

ters, perceived that it was impossible for the Imperial Government to legislate upon the question without the consent or request of the people of these colonies. Accordingly they added the preamble declaring that "whereas the people of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick desire to be federally united, &c." That statute could not have been placed before the Imperial Parliament unless it had these words in it, for it would be unconstitutional unless the people of these colonies had testified their assent to it. Therefore the preamble being false, the statute is unconstitutional and falls to the ground.

The resolutions go on to say that the people were not only not consulted, but that they were purposely and designedly prevented from being consulted. Is not that a true statement? What did the House of Assembly, who recently sat upon these benches, with no great credit to them, do in the month of March last? When it was moved that the people of Nova Scotia had a right to be consulted at the polls, whether they would consent to be confederated or not, that resolution was negatived by 32 against 16 representatives of the people. Whose servants were these 32 persons? The servants of the Executive Council; they ignored the authority of the people, and said that the constitution of Nova Scotia belonged to Dr. Tupper and a few others. Then I think we have asserted strictly in accordance with the fact that the people of Nova Scotia were systematically and perseveringly kept from passing upon the subject of confederation. We have also stated with truth that the last election turned entirely upon confederation. I have heard men venture to assert that other issues entered into that election, but men who say this will state anything. No man living before or during the election, can venture to deny the fact that confederation was the great question which excited the people from one end of the province to the other. Now there is another clause which tells us that these colonies were, in the opinion of the people of Nova Scotia, united to each other by a connection better and superior to that of any confederation that could be devised even upon the fairest and wisest terms. I believe that to be literally true. It is a matter of political opinion. I have always thought that the system of confederation was the worst by which we could be united. It is impossible so to regulate the conflicting interests of the different countries in a manner that will prevent conflicts and difficulties arising. If you leave to the several countries their individuality and allow them to retain their local legislatures whilst you attempt to combine them at the same time under one general head, the experiment will be fatal—in time it must and will end in civil war and the shedding of blood. I believe that has been the experience of the world with respect to confederation. The provinces have now five governments instead of three. If they were really united they would be stronger, inasmuch as the whole is stronger than the parts, they would have one head, one legislature, one revenue, one set of laws, one tariff. On the other hand, for the reasons I have previously given the system of confederation is, in reality, the worst that could be devised for these Colonies, if the wish is to promote harmony and prosperity among them.

We shall pass these resolutions, and we may, if necessary, add one or two more; and when we have done so, it is the design of the Government and House to send Delegates to England as soon as we can, to submit to the Queen an humble Address, embracing the substance of these resolutions; and I have much pleasure in announcing, so far as I am able to judge, my belief and conviction that the Delegation cannot possibly fail of success.