

the victorious legions of Grant, the victors indulged, as was natural, in national demonstrations of rejoicing at the event; but they did not insult the brave old general and his shattered battalions by compelling them to join in any jubilant expressions of gladness over the discomfiture of their hopes and the downfall of their country. (Hear, hear.) Nova Scotia is in this Dominion as a conquered country, deprived by most foul and unfair means of her long enjoyed privilege of self-government; and the men whom her people have sent to represent them in this House, to protest against the injustice and wrong that has been done her, to claim for her equal rights with the other Provinces while in the Dominion, and a speedy release from bondage, have not yet learned to kiss their fetters and smile at their country's dishonour. The honourable member who last addressed you, in common with all the representatives from Ontario and Quebec who have taken part in the debate, assumed that Nova Scotia's complaint was only against the mode in which Confederation was carried, and not against the thing itself. Let me disabuse the minds of honourable gentlemen in the House of that fallacy. Nova Scotia's hostility to the measure lies deeper than any mere punctilious views of political etiquette as to the mode of its accomplishment. True, her people do complain, and justly, of the trickery and corruption by which Confederation was carried; but their main ground of complaint is against the thing itself, which they believe, even if it had been brought about by fair and constitutional means, must always prove injurious to the chief industrial interests of their Province. When the outlines of the scheme were first made public after the Quebec Conference, the people of Nova Scotia instinctively shrank from it as a dangerous thing. They felt that for a people situated as they were, living by the seashore, and largely interested in maritime pursuits, to surrender their self-government, and unite with an inland country of larger population, with diverse interests, and with different, and it may be a hostile commercial policy, was a very unwise experiment. For over eighty years they had had a Legislature of their own, under whose fostering care they were rapidly acquiring a large degree of material prosperity. Under the wise and liberal legislation of their own Parliament, not only were the local trade of the country, its fisheries and other home industries promoted, but the largest facilities were given for the development of the shipbuilding capabilities of the Province, and a com-

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mercial navy was created, which gave to Nova Scotia a large share of the foreign carrying trade, and placed her in the proud position of being, in proportion to population, the foremost maritime country on the face of the globe. Sir, Nova Scotia might well be proud of her ships, and her sailors, for in every sea, in every harbour, in all the great commercial centres of the world, wherever the free trading system of the mother country has carried the British flag, there could be found a Nova Scotia ship and a Nova Scotia crew, bearing abroad the name and fame of their country, successfully competing in foreign marts with the most favoured and powerful maritime rivals, and winning wealth and renown to enrich and elevate their native land. The people of that Province felt, sir, that to change the system that had produced these grand results, to enter into any new political connections that would deprive them of the control of their own commercial system—to surrender into the hands of an inland people with whom they had hitherto had but few interests in common, the power to control their commercial system, to say under what tariff they should trade, with what countries they should buy and sell, was an exceedingly hazardous step, and one that could scarcely result otherwise than disastrously to the country that made the experiment. While entertaining these views, however, the people felt no dread of such a measure being thrust upon them. True, they saw the leaders of the two great political parties in that Province, with a most sudden and suspicious forgetfulness of past antipathies, combine for its accomplishment, but they knew that the honest convictions of the large majority of their representatives were hostile to the measure, and they rested confident and trustful behind the double line of defences they thought they possessed in their own legislature, and in the British Parliament, neither of which, they felt convinced, would ever consent to make such a sweeping change, a change that was in effect no less than a total subversion of the political institutions of the country, without the consent of the people. But they did not content themselves merely with this passive confidence in their members; they took the proper and constitutional mode of bringing their views before the legislature of the Province, and from every county petitions with thousands of signatures were poured into both Houses, asking that a measure involving such radical changes, and calculated to affect so seriously the interests of the country should not be passed without the