

Britain and these colonies. I need not specify these assumed grievances; they are familiar to every one. They may culminate at no distant day in a war between the two countries. They have already culminated in a species of commercial warfare aimed at the prosperity of British America. Does any doubt that the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty is intended partly as a punishment of these Provinces for their sympathy with the Southern States during the late struggle, and partly as an annoyance to Great Britain for her alleged bad faith as a neutral power? But, sir, there can be less doubt that it is chiefly relied on—I mean the repeal of the treaty—as a great means of fostering annexation sentiments in British North America. I shall prove this assertion presently beyond the possibility of doubt. Assuming it to be correct, is it not our duty to adopt such steps as may frustrate any such design? Now, sir, I ask what step is so likely to conduce to the result we ought to have in view as a union under one Government, which will give all these colonies a common policy and a common platform of action? Isolation in relation to reciprocal trade, in the present crisis, has peculiar dangers. It gives the Washington authorities complete command of the whole situation. It gives them the power of playing us off against each other, of exciting jealousies, producing dissensions and creating interdicts, which can have but one tendency. No Government under the sun more thoroughly understand that game than the Government of the United States. They will play it to our ruin and their own advantage if we leave the cards in their hands. I do not wish to go further in connection with this view of the subject, but it has had a powerful influence on my mind. It affords a most weighty argument in favor of immediate union.

I have said that the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty is intended to produce annexation tendencies in British America. I think I can adduce evi-

dence on this point so conclusive as to amount to a moral demonstration. Allow me, in the first place, to revert to the history of the Commercial Congress held last summer in Detroit, representing the great mercantile interests of the United States and British America. Need I remind hon. gentlemen that on that occasion an important functionary of the Washington Government, a gentleman occupying the high position of American Consul at Montreal, the first city in British America, declared that he attended that Congress at the request of his Government, and with authority to express their views and wishes with regard to reciprocal trade. He earnestly advised the abrogation of the treaty, and openly and insultingly told the colonial members of the Convention, that the object of this policy was to produce the annexation of British America to the Republic. We have, then, the fact that Mr. Potter went to Detroit declaring himself in the confidence of his Government and the exponent of their views, and we all know that his utterances have never been disowned by his masters; and we have the further most important fact, that on the first meeting of Congress the policy that gentleman foreshadowed as that of the Washington Government was carried out. If, then, Mr. Potter was correct in foreshadowing the policy of his Government, is not the conclusion irresistible that he was equally correct as to the wishes and motives that were at the foundation of that policy? These significant facts cannot fail to make a due impression on the mind of every man who desires to maintain our connection with the Empire, and they strongly confirm my convictions, not only of the desirability but of the necessity of union.

We know from the newspaper press of the United States, that the question of a union of British America has attracted considerable attention in that country, and that the proposal is generally received with little parti-