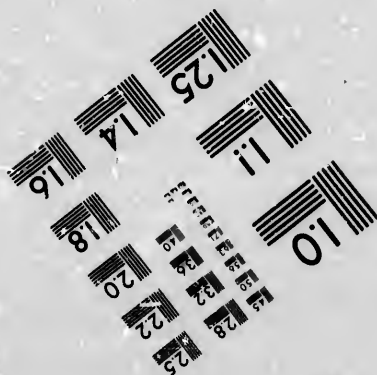
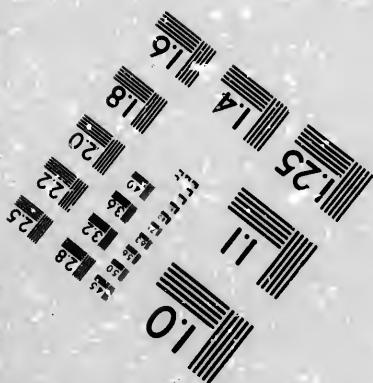
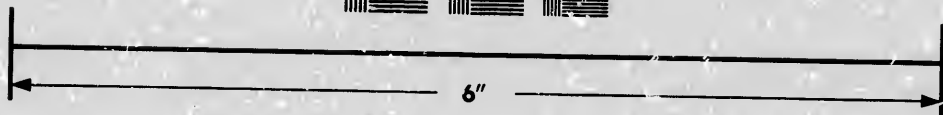
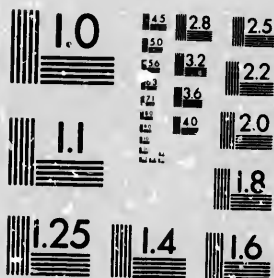


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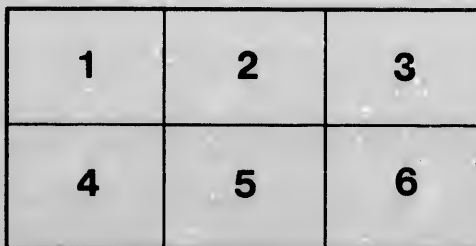
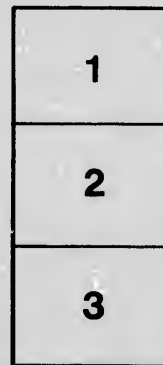
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BRITISH AMERICA.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST A UNION OF THE
PROVINCES REVIEWED;

WITH

Further Reasons for Confederation.

BY

THE HON. J. McCULLY, Q.C.

MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF NOVA SCOTIA, AND ONE OF THE DELEGATES.

"This is my own, my native land."

"Colum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt."

LONDON:

F. ALGAR, 11, CLEMENT'S LANE, LOMBARD STREET.

MDCCLXVII.

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CONFEDERATION OF THE BRITISH NORTH-AMERICAN PROVINCES.

Confederation Considered in Relation to the Interests of the Empire ; a Pamphlet. By the Hon. JOSEPH HOWE.

A Letter to the Right Hon. the Earl of Carnarvon, Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. By the Hon. CHARLES TUPPER, in reply to Mr. HOWE.

British American Union, a Review of Hon. Joseph Howe's Essay.
By P. S. HAMILTON, Esq.

The Organisation of the Empire ; a Pamphlet. By the Hon. JOSEPH HOWE.

THE Future Destiny of British North-America,—an expanse of territory considerably larger than the whole of the United States,—with its mines, its minerals, its forests, its fisheries, its lakes and its rivers, is a subject of the very deepest interest, and may well command the gravest consideration of the foremost men of the age.

The population of the immense tract of country, stretching quite across the American Continent, from Halifax on the Atlantic, to Vancouver on the Pacific Ocean, at present entirely under British dominion, and acknowledging British rule, is between four and five millions of souls. East of the Rocky Mountains and the North-west territory there is a population of four millions, and it is in reference to this portion of these British possessions that the scheme of Confederation more immediately refers.

Counting the two Canadas as one province, which they have been for many purposes for the last twenty-five years, during which time they have been united by an Act of the Imperial Parliament, there are five Colonies — that is to say, Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island, which it has been proposed should be united under a system of Confederation, that, so far as the outside world is concerned, would constitute them thenceforward a single province, and the germ of a future nation.

At present they possess five separate independent tariffs. It is proposed that after Confederation there should be but one. They have five different currencies, five separate independent post-office departments, five militia systems, and five legislatures, exercising law-making powers, subordinate only to the Imperial Government, which it is contemplated so to reconstruct, that one central legislature shall take cognisance of the whole. There would remain nevertheless, in each province, a local legislature, having jurisdiction over local subjects, and dealing with them much after the manner that Municipal Corporations manage affairs within the larger cities of Great Britain.

This scheme of union was struck out, and reduced to form, at Quebec, in the autumn of 1864, by leading men from all the Provinces named. In order to secure as far as possible a fair representation of all interests and all parties at the Quebec Convention, as it was called, the governor for the time being in each Province was advised to appoint, and did appoint, as delegates not only the leading men of his cabinet, but the *leaders of the Constitutional Opposition as well*. In Canada a coalition government had recently been formed, in which the leaders of government and opposition, Honorable

John A. McDonald on the one side, and the Honorable George Brown on the other, with their respective political friends, held office, and had seats in this convention. In New Brunswick, Honorable Mr. Tilley, leader of government, selected Honorable Mr. Chandler, a leading man in opposition. In Nova Scotia, the same policy was adopted by Dr. Tupper, the Premier of that Province. The Honorable Mr. Archibald, leader of opposition in the House of Assembly, and Hon. Mr. McCully, leader of opposition in the Upper House or Legislative Council, were appointed on the commission. A like policy prevailed in Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland. It was a commission thus composed that prepared the resolutions, known as "the Quebec Scheme," and after weeks of labour, with much unanimity, they reported it to the Colonial Office for adoption. This is a feature in the early history of Confederation,—the character and appointment of the delegates,—that does not appear to be prominently brought out by any of the writers on the subject, but one which I think can hardly be over-estimated. It is as if Lord Derby and Lord Russell, Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright and Mr. Lowe, were heartily to agree upon a subject of public policy, a Reform Bill if you choose, and were then to submit their project to Parliament, where, after a full and free public discussion upon its merits, it met the approbation of about three-fourths of the members of both houses. In such a case the nation at large would, I apprehend, not hesitate to accept a conclusion thus arrived at, and with a great deal of confidence.

That there would nevertheless be in Great Britain, as in the Provinces, a dissenting minority, even after passing such an ordeal, is by no means unlikely, and that the opposition would be led up by some clever man who either never had obtained a seat in Parliament, or, if he had, had lost it, is about the most likely thing imaginable.

Such is the condition of this Confederation question as I write. The Hon. Mr. Howe, who now takes exception to the policy of uniting the North American Provinces, although he has figured prominently in times past as its enthusiastic advocate in Nova Scotia, is not, at present, and has not been since the last general election in 1863, a member of the Legislature.

Mr. Howe, however, takes up a bold position of hostility, and now pronounces broadly against the policy of Confederation. He argues that the Canadas and New Brunswick are such distant outlying indefensible possessions of the Crown that in case of war with the United States, it would be impossible to retain them; but that Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland are so situate, that they might be successfully held against all comers. Without at all conceding so much, with New Brunswick, Canada, and all the great country lying in the rear, nine-tenths of the whole gone, fisheries and all, what earthly interest could the people of Great Britain possibly have, one would like to know, in the remaining Provinces to justify a contest for sovereignty there? But it is said that Nova Scotia could be made a second Gibraltar. I doubt it; and if it could, there is a very prevalent impression abroad in this country I find, that one Gibraltar is quite as much as the nation needs, or is disposed to maintain.

Besides, the people of British North America claim to be a portion of the Empire, and have recently evinced their willingness to exert themselves to the utmost to defend their soil against all invaders, and if it were the nation's interest so to do,—which I by no means admit,—it is hardly to be expected that Great Britain is going to play the Hindu, and cast her young offspring on the other side of the ocean, into the neighbouring political Ganges, that whirls, and eddies, and rushes away down to the ocean of Democracy.

In the arrangements contemplated under Confederation, the Provinces ask no additional favors, no countenance or protection beyond what they have had extended to them in times past. On the contrary, they avow themselves both willing and prepared to contribute their fair quota, if ever the occasion shall require it, to defend their common country. They have recently given hostages for this at Limestone Ridge; they are not prepared, however, to erect themselves into a separate and independent nationality at present, and may be unwilling to have such greatness and such a responsibility unexpectedly thrust upon them. Still less are they desirous of being annexed to the United States,

or to have the monarchical institutions they enjoy rudely withdrawn, and others of a republican, distasteful character substituted. And yet a settled conviction has already taken possession of the minds of leading Colonial statesmen, and that opinion I find, is gaining ground in this country also, that unless the British North American Provinces are sustained in their present effort to unite, one by one, they must inevitably be absorbed in the American Republic, and that too at no very distant day. If now aided in their Policy of Confederation however, even that class of persons who think that the Empire has no need of colonies, and would be better and happier without them, at some future time may yet be delighted to find their present population doubled, and a new Empire founded on the American Continent, one scarcely inferior in extent to that which occupies a similar geographical position in the North of Europe.

But Mr. Howe has not been permitted unmolested to assail the policy of Confederation. The Hon. Dr. Tupper has written a pamphlet, by which, in a masterly manner, Mr. Howe is made to refute himself. Whatever the ability displayed by him in attacking Confederation, nothing is clearer than that he himself has in times past displayed vastly more ability in its advocacy. Assuming that up to 1864 he was a warm and ardent advocate and supporter of Union, and such there can be no doubt but he was, it is now equally unfortunate for himself, and for the cause of which he has become the newly fledged champion, that he, of all men in British America, should have been selected as the opponent of Confederation. All the while that this grand question has been before the Provinces—we refer to the Quebec Scheme—say from October 1864, up to the date of the termination of the Reciprocity Treaty, March 1866, when Mr. Howe's office, as Imperial Fishery Commissioner ceased, and with it his salary, he boasted that he had made no sign, uttered never a word hostile to Confederation, or inconsistent with his life-long advocacy of the measure. If so, his salary must have muzzled his pen a full year and a-half. Be that as it may, one thing is certain, both Dr. Tupper and Mr. Hamilton have possessed themselves of his own artillery,

turned it upon him with a vengeance, and opened a fire perfectly annihilating. It is utterly impossible that the Mr. Howe of 1864 and previously, and the Mr. Howe of 1866, can both be orthodox in this matter. The only question the reader of the two different classes of sentiments put forth would be likely to ask would be, about his identity. For instance, in the summer of 1864, addressing a public meeting in Halifax, given in honor of a visit of Canadian gentlemen who were guests, Mr. Howe said :

"He was not one of those who thanked God that he was a Novascotian merely, for he was a Canadian as well. He had never thought he was a Novascotian, but he had looked across the broad continent, at the great territory which the Almighty had given us for an inheritance, and studied the mode by which it could be consolidated, the mode by which it could be united, the mode by which it could be made strong and vigorous, while the old flag still floated over the soil. * * *

"With the territory of Canada, with the rivers of Nova Scotia, with the inexhaustible fisheries—what a country to live in! And why should Union not be brought about? Was it because we wished to live and die in our insignificance,—that we would sooner make money rather than that our country should grow? God forbid! *He had always been in favor of uniting any two, three, four, or the whole five of the Provinces.*"

Turning to the Canadians he continued :

"Oh, my friends, go back to your homes, and say there is at least one Novascotian honest enough to say to you this,—that, if you do that—(separate), you will commit an act of political suicide, and although I ought not perhaps to give the advice, I would rather see every public man upon both sides of politics crucified, than I would divide Canada now that Canada is united. Join the Maritime Provinces if you can; but, at any rate, stick together—hold your own. *He was pleased to think the day was rapidly approaching when the Provinces would be united, with one flag above their heads, one thought in all their bosoms, with one sovereign, and one constitution.*"

Thus spoke the Hon. Joseph Howe of 1864. Mark now what follows. Referring to the Canadians and to this same Canada in 1866, within two years from the date of his Halifax address—I quote from his pamphlet—he writes :

"They are shut in by frost from the outer world for five months of the year. They are at the mercy of a powerful neighbour whose population already

outnumbers them by more than eight to one, and who a quarter of a century hence will probably present sixty-eight millions to six millions on the opposite side of a naturally defenceless frontier. Surely such conditions as these ought to repress inordinate ambition or lust of territory on the part of the public men of Canada. The wisdom of Solomon, and the energy and strategy of Frederick the Great, would seem to be required to preserve and strengthen such a people, if formed, as it appears they desire to form themselves, into 'a new Nationality.' While they discharge their duties as unobtrusive good neighbours to the surrounding populations, and of loyal subjects of the Empire, Great Britain will protect them by her energy in other fields should the Province become untenable; but it is evident that a more unpromising nucleus of a new nation can hardly be found on the face of the earth, and that any organized communities, having a reasonable chance to do any thing better, would be politically insane to give up their distinct formations, and subject themselves to the domination of Canada."

The foregoing is reproduced as one sample, out of many furnished by his opponents, of the contradictory, inconsistent views of Mr. Howe in reference to this all-important topic. What authority can he now be, for or against Confederation? And yet what seems most unaccountable is, that he refuses to admit, up to this hour, that he has changed his opinions, or advocated inconsistent views on the subject.

Mr. Annand, who is also here in England—until lately a Unionist also, and a very Boswell to Mr. Howe—finding probably that his friend could not well survive the onslaught made upon him by his antagonists, and that the selection of such an advocate to oppose Confederation had been most unhappy, throws himself into the breach, and rushes to the rescue. He has furnished a pamphlet of forty-two pages, which however has commanded little or no attention. The principal object of this writer is evidently to create ill feeling if possible, and foment discord between the manufacturing classes of Great Britain, and the people of Canada. During the recent Session of their Legislature, the Canadians, in view of Confederation, have pronounced against Protection, and struck out boldly in favor of a Free Trade policy. This Mr. Annand charges upon the Canadian Government and Legislature as mere dissimulation; an attempt to wheedle the Maritime Provinces into Confederation, and to conciliate public opinion in this country until the measure is passed. The averment is as unsubstantiated as it is disingenuous.

A Protection policy once abandoned, in any Legislature, is not likely ever again to be re-enacted. If it be what its friends and advocates contend it is, not only the more rational but the more prosperous policy, how does Mr. Annand expect that under Confederation the Legislature, with such an infusion of free traders as the Maritime Colonies would supply,—how does he expect that the country can ever again fall back to Protection? Nothing could be more unlikely. Mr. Annand has referred to the *New York Albion*, one of the most ably conducted newspapers in America, and has reproduced a lengthy article from its columns, written in condemnation of the policy of the Finance Minister of Canada, on the subject of a provincial loan and monetary transactions, which occurred in the year 1865. The editor of the *Albion* may have been quite right in his strictures upon that subject. I pronounce no opinion. It is not immediately under consideration. But on the subject of Confederation, the *Albion*, under date of the 13th October last, speaks out most unmistakeably. Of the *New York Albion* Mr. Annand has said: "It is a paper of the highest respectability, moderate in tone, and has been for forty-four years the consistent advocate of British interests." Granted: and I thank him for the admission. The *New York Albion*, looking at Confederation from a wholly different, and an independent stand-point from that occupied in the Provinces, or here—to do him full and ample justice having first republished Mr. Howe's entire pamphlet—among other things observes:

"Mr. Howe is a gentleman whom we were formerly glad to number amongst the foremost of the advocates of Union and Consolidation of strength for all British America. But he now disingenuously attempts to show, that the best interests of both Colonies and Empire are to be found in a lasting severance of all ties between the several Provinces themselves, and in a perpetual clinging to the parent state for protection and sustenance. * * * In fact the arguments contained in this pamphlet from beginning to end, are calculated to divide and weaken British America throughout, and would have a tendency to dampen, if not entirely extinguish, any germs of national feeling that may be at present growing up in the minds of the most advanced and intelligent Colonists. Certainly the Honorable gentleman's stay at Washington, and his seeming dread of the terrible Fenians, manifested since his return, has quite unnerved him as a Briton, and for the present unfitted him for either advocating or representing British America's interests, either in the old world or the new."

In this passage, without any distortion of what is plainly

enough written, the reader becomes painfully aware that Mr. Howe stands openly and undisguisedly charged with infidelity to the land of his birth and to the flag of his country ; and Mr. Annand's eulogy of the *Albion* and its Editor, and all so well merited, gives this crushing rebuke a significance and an emphasis not likely to be misunderstood either in England or the Provinces.

Mr. Annand, in the first page of his pamphlet addressed to Lord Carnarvon, says : "Associated with my friend Mr. Howe, I have been sent to this country to oppose the scheme of Confederation, &c., &c."

But a preliminary question may well be asked here. Three of the Provinces, Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, in Legislature convened, have authorised the Queen's representatives to select delegates to come to England, and confer among themselves and with the government of Great Britain, and prepare the draft of an Act having for its object the Confederation of the Provinces, which shall then be submitted to the Imperial Parliament—there to be discussed, and finally passed. But where, gentlemen, are your credentials ?

Mr. Annand's position, and that of his friend Mr. Howe, is that the Resolutions of the two branches of the Legislature of a Colony, no matter with what amount of unanimity passed, are not to be received as expressive of the opinions of the people of that Colony—that the minority by collecting signatures to petitions of persons of all classes, all ages, and all conditions—electors and non-electors—are then in a condition to overrule and counteract the constitutionally expressed desires of a Colonial Parliament. There may indeed be "nothing new under the sun," but I greatly mistake if any precedent is to be found for such a procedure. If Messrs. Howe and Annand are the properly constituted representatives of the people of Nova Scotia, by virtue and in consequence of holding petitions prepared by themselves, and signed indiscriminately by all who could be persuaded or influenced to affix their names to them, then the so-called delegates appointed under the sanction of Parliament by the respective governors, are not what they assume to be. And, on the other hand, if they are constitutionally authorised delegates, and hold powers pleni-

potentiary from their respective governments to treat upon the subject entrusted to them—as they unquestionably do—then it is difficult to comprehend what the *locus standi* of Messrs. Howe and Annand in this country at this moment is, in reference to this matter. In the proceedings adopted thus far, the respective Provinces have strictly pursued a course pointed out by Lord Carnarvon's predecessor, Mr. Cardwell; and it will be strange indeed if, in a country possessing constitutional government, the opinions of the people are not to be collected, as suggested by both Mr. Cardwell and his predecessor, through their representatives, but entirely independent of them. Mr. Howe may perhaps persuade the people of England and the British House of Commons to adopt that view; but up to the present he has not, I apprehend, made much progress.

But it is said that the delegates in England from the Colonies have no power to legislate for the Provinces they represent. My reply is, they make no pretence to the possession of any such powers. They are here, not to legislate, but to advise with the government of Great Britain preparatory to the draft of an Act being submitted to the Imperial Parliament, by which the Provinces may be Confederated. It will not be denied, I presume, that the British Parliament possesses the needful constitutional power for such a purpose, and that there are precedents in abundance for the exercise of it; nor can it be pretended that the delegates have not been regularly and constitutionally appointed to the offices they occupy. If there is one principle that obtains, and remains unchallenged and undisputed among communities where constitutional governments exist, it is this,—that the minority shall defer to the majority. But when these majorities are as three to two, or two to one in both Houses of Parliament, when or where did that minority ever before claim the right to control such a majority, or to obstruct, overrule, and defeat their policy? These Anti-Confederate pamphleteers affirm that they have petitions, largely signed, protesting against Confederation. That may be so; but is the House of Commons the proper place to present them? And if so, the petitions can only speak for themselves at the proper time. Whose constituents are these petitioners supposed to be? Who will be in a condition to vouch for the signatures and the identity of the

individuals represented by the names? These are questions that may or may not be asked and suggested by the novelty of the case and the lack of precedent. But aside from any objection arising from that quarter, and which the friends of Confederation from the Colonies might be sorry to press, Mr. Howe's and Mr. Annand's constitutional right to represent any persons but themselves is, for reasons already submitted, quite another matter.

In this connection, I may observe, in reply to the argument for an appeal to the people in this case preparatory to Confederation, that it is not a little remarkable that the present House of Assembly in Nova Scotia, which a few months ago passed the Resolution favouring Confederation, and the appointment of delegates, by a majority of thirty-one to nineteen, is one elected under *manhood suffrage*, with the exception of three of its members, who have taken seats since the law of manhood suffrage expired. Nor less remarkable is it that these three members all opposed the Resolution, and sat in that minority!

But while Mr. Howe assumes his recent attitude of hostility towards Confederation, in a second pamphlet, entitled "The Organisation of the Empire," he propounds a theory as impracticable, I apprehend, as it is strange and startling. His scheme contemplates direct representation in the British House of Commons for the Colonies; and, according to their "size, population, and relative importance, each Colony is to send one, two, or three members of their Cabinets."

It is very easy to pen down such generalities as the above, but if the author were required to fix a scale by which Colonies were to be represented in the House of Commons, he would then discover how utterly futile and impracticable his project was. If population be adopted as the rule, then, in order to secure one member for Nova Scotia, with her 360,000 people, Canada, with her 2,900,000, would be entitled to eight, or nearly so; but to ensure Prince Edward Island, with say 90,000 of a population, one member, Nova Scotia must have four, and Canada thirty at the least. But suppose a vote of want of confidence, or something tantamount, to be moved in the Administration, would it be tolerated that these fifty, or one hundred

Colonial Members, if all the Colonies were represented, should record their votes and change a Ministry, or compel, perhaps, an appeal to the country in shape of an Election—they themselves seated high above the tempest, and unaffected by the vote? Would it be tolerated here in England that these Colonial representatives should hold the balance of power after that fashion in their hands, ready perhaps, on the return of the new writs, to give form and fashion to a new Ministry, or compel a new appeal? If the Colonial Members are to be selected from the Colonial Cabinet, as Mr. Howe suggests, the probability would be, that if even their seats were vacated by a dissolution of the House of Commons, the same Cabinet would either return the same men, or others holding the same opinions. If wealth, size, population, or relative importance, or all combined, gave the right of representation, in order to do justice to each Colony, a numerical disparity of numbers must obtain, upon some recognized principle; and in that case the new element would—must be—so considerable, that instead of the Colonies being subordinate to the Empire as heretofore, the reverse would be the case, and the Empire would be virtually subordinated to the Colonies. Again, as taxation is unconstitutional without representation, so the converse necessarily obtains, and representation confers the right of taxation. What Colony would consent to that? To such a crude, undigested, ill-advised scheme, neither the Provinces on the one side, nor the British Parliament on the other, are likely ever to give the slightest countenance.

If existing relations between the Colonies and the Kingdom cannot continue, most assuredly the solution of the difficulty will never be found in the plan suggested by Mr. Howe; that is to say, in the extension to the former of the right of representation in the British Parliament. Before dismissing this important subject, I take the liberty to add, that if “the size” of the country to be thus represented were taken as the rule for representation, then Canada would be entitled to eighteen members to Nova Scotia one, being more than eighteen times as large, and in like proportion to the other Colonies. If the “relative importance” were to be the test, the question would be one not easily adjusted, and the probability is, applying this

principle to the British North American Provinces, the smaller communities would be in no better condition. But what kind of a Colonial Cabinet would that be numerically, that could spare from its members five, much less thirty representatives in the House of Commons? And who could afford to give eight months a year of his time gratuitously for the honor? And which of the Provinces would consent to include annually in its civil list a sum sufficient to keep from three to thirty gentlemen resident in London as Representatives in Parliament? But how are these members of the House of Commons to be chosen out of a Colonial Cabinet? Select three of the foremost men from any existing Colonial Cabinet to be absent six months of each year, by any process to be devised, and I venture to say—from some Colonial Cabinet experience—that at the very next session of Provincial Parliament, if not before, there would be a collapse of the whole, and a change of Administration,—the inevitable result of which would of course be a recall of the Members, who themselves, if it were the case of Australia or of Canada or British Columbia, before the Atlantic Cable laid, might have helped to vote down an English Administration after their right of voting had ceased. The fact is that a little, and but a very little, reflection must convince all but the most sceptical, that the project of “organizing the Empire” by any such method is the veriest clap-trap, and unworthy of serious consideration.

There are many other objections not noticed, equally fatal to such a scheme which suggest themselves. The relative position of the Colonies to the Empire has been so thoroughly worked out, that it is almost impossible to imagine a case for which a precedent does not exist, and which by common consent is held to be binding. But change the system as suggested, and all parties would be once more afloat. Besides all this, the people of these Islands have at this moment under consideration the enlargement of the right of their own representation in Parliament: a matter pressing for an early solution one way or the other, and until that is satisfactorily disposed of, it is hardly to be expected that the question of Representation on the part of the out-lying dependencies of the Crown, which already enjoy the amplest representation in their own Legislatures, will command much attention or respect in England.

But if Colonies require to be represented in the House of Commons, why not in the House of Lords as well? Has Mr. Howe really ever deliberately and comprehensively considered the subject? I fear not. Under Confederation, the United Provinces as a whole, as already hinted, are expected to retain the same relation to the Empire as heretofore. And it is but justice to admit that at no period of the history of the country has there been a time when the relations between the Colonial Office and the respective Province were on a sounder and more satisfactory condition than at the present. Kind words have just been interchanged between an Australian Minister and members of the British Government; and the mission of the delegates from the American Provinces to this country, be it observed, is but to secure a modification of their constitutions by which their trade and commerce and mutual relations may be improved, their loyalty and love of England endure, and their coasts and frontiers, in case of invasion, be better protected, and more easily defended. They seek no changes in the relation that obtains between the people they represent, and the Imperial Government: that is no part of their mission. Other parties, Mr. Howe and Mr. Amand at their head, have set on foot an agitation, having for its object, to defeat the well understood wishes of the people of the whole Provinces, as expressed by their representatives, and have appealed to England for aid to assist them in their enterprise; and Mr Howe, while reprobating the idea of a Union of all the Provinces, adroitly seeks to draw off attention from the subject which is really the matter in hand, that is, the improvement of inter-colonial relations, to another, an entirely different and chimerical scheme—the Organization of the Empire; a scheme about which nobody in the Colonies takes any interest whatever, which has never been discussed in any of the Provincial Legislatures, nor ever been so much as referred to in the Colonial Press, except to be smiled at, and disposed of, as an engineer would treat an essay on perpetual motion, or some similar sick man's dream.*

* As the proprietor of the Nova Scotian Newspaper, in a leading editorial in the number of 30th September, 1840, Mr. Howe himself attacked this project of Representation of the Colonies in Parliament, of which it would appear

A large portion of the pamphleteering against a Union of the Provinces, I am sorry to observe, has for its unconcealed object to excite the prejudices of the British people, against their fellow subjects in the Colonies, and to create mutual distrust, antipathy and dislike. It is represented in these Essays that one of the leading motives of the delegates, and those whom they represent, is, to shift burdens from their own shoulders, and place them upon those of the people of England. If this were so, or if the people of this country believed that any such intentions lurked in the minds of the people of the American Provinces, then indeed, instead of according a hearty welcome to their delegates, as by their public press and otherwise they have done, then they would turn a deaf ear, and properly so, to their application for Imperial legislation, and recommend them to return again to their respective Provinces as they came. But it is not so; and the Anti-Unionists who, *in this country*, make use of such misrepresentations, in order to accomplish their purposes, when *in the Provinces*, strange to say, endeavour to awaken prejudice against the mother-country, and against Confederation, by statements and reasoning exactly the reverse. I say this advisedly. *There* the people are told, and the Anti-Confederate Press never wearies repeating

Thomas Bannister, Esq., of the Inner Temple, if not the originator, was among the earliest advocates. Mr. Howe, true to the instinct of political suicide, among other things, then wrote—"Of a Colonial Representation in Parliament, we have long entertained a strong and unfavourable opinion. * * * It would be impossible we think to form a Colonial phalanx or party; and why? Because the Colonists have no common and universal bond of interest and connexion. The policy which would suit one Colony would be inimical and offensive to another. * * The Colonies would lose the benefit of that sympathy which now operates upon a mass of the members, *because we have no representatives there.*" And by way of conclusion he adds—"And we here take this early opportunity of denouncing a scheme which, even if practicable, might involve the Colonies in embarrassments far more weighty and disastrous than any benefits it would confer." Such were Mr. Howe's views in 1840; a good while ago it is true, but the reasoning is as applicable now as then. Besides, it is hardly fair to the originator of the scheme for Mr. Howe now to claim the paternity of it, when he evidently draws his inspiration from an article in the *Colonial Magazine*, which he was reviewing; and we are not surprised that Mr. Bannister, the author of it, should complain that the reviewer at this time of day should be found "stealing his thunder," or, in the more modern phrase, be caught "shining in borrowed plumes."

it, there in the Provinces the principal ground of objection taken and urged too among the less intelligent, and with not a little success, is, that Confederation means—additional Colonial taxation for self-defence, for Provincial armies and navies, and military organisations, from which the people are at present free; and from which, but for this impolitic Quebec Scheme, they would certainly, in all time coming, so have remained. Such a method of attack by unscrupulous agitators, with a leading Colonial Press at command, is well adapted in provincial communities to produce effects not easily counteracted. Fancy a staff of smooth glib-tongued emissaries of a central organisation, with a clever man at its head, let loose upon the rural population of a new country, with a story that Confederation means immediate independence, a “new nationality,” separation from Great Britain, a standing army, and a navy to be provided for out of new taxes, to be levied indiscriminately—poll taxes if need be—on all classes. In Nova Scotia Mr. Annand, by means of his newspaper press—being the publisher and proprietor of the *Halifax Morning Chronicle*,—Mr. Annand has not hesitated to sound a note of alarm all over Nova Scotia, by declaring that the object of uniting the Provinces is, that the Militia of Nova Scotia may be liable to do duty on the frontiers of Canada, a thousand miles away; that the fishermen of the Maritime Provinces may be required to man gunboats on the Canadian lakes; and by some tyrannical exercise of Canadian influence, Nova Scotians in some unexplained manner may be made targets for American marksmen, with their deadly improved breach-loading rifles. Their wives, he has declared, are thus to be made widows, their children orphans. Having by such and similar tales of horror to be enacted, paved the way, Mr. Howe, spending weeks travelling from place to place, calling public meetings and addressing them, exciting terror, and Mr. Annand aiding as described, they follow up the advantage by sending out paid agents with petitions ready prepared into the houses and hamlets of the rural population for signatures. Is it matter for wonder that old men and children, electors and non-electors,—aye, and the very paupers of the parishes,—should rush forth to sign them? It would have been a much stranger thing if all who could be duped by such misrepresentations had not pressed forward to aid in counteracting a

scheme, which they are told, for the aggrandisement of a few is to ruin the many, to desolate their homes, and reduce their country to a condition of wretchedness and misery altogether indescribable. This is the plain, easy and truthful explanation of the nature and character of the greater portion of any petitions held by Mr. Howe and his friend Mr. Annand.

While the people of British North America, however, are in no condition at present to take upon themselves the status, or to assume the responsibilities of an independent nation, they have not sent their representatives to England, as supplicants, to increase the burdens of her people, and would be ashamed in any way, for their exclusive benefit, to add to the volume of taxation the people of Great Britain are already called upon to bear. On the contrary, according to their means, according to their ability, they are ready and pledge themselves to give of their substance, nor hold their lives dear, in the common cause, whenever the exigencies of the Empire require the sacrifice. In the earlier history of the Colonies, I am free to admit, that there was perhaps some excuse for the lectures read to Colonists by the *Times* and other London journals. Nor am I prepared to deny that the strictures of the British press, and the letters of Goldwin Smith, have had a beneficial and a wholesome effect upon the colonial mind. One thing is clear, and incapable of being controverted—and that is, that within the last few years, all the British American Provinces have manifested a willingness to organize volunteer forces, train their militia, and expend of their means towards self-defence and that of the Empire, to an extent never before attempted. The people of these Provinces are eminently a frugal, thriving, enterprising class; their farms, their forests, their fisheries, have largely monopolized their attention. But the provincial, like his neighbour over the border, possesses an aptitude for military acquirements, which a very small amount of training would in a short time so perfect, that in a righteous cause, he would not be likely to reflect discredit upon the race from which he has sprung. Chippewa and Chateauguay are associated with incidents of a kind that need bring no blush to the cheeks of the native Canadian. And Williams of Kars, and Inglis of Lucknow, are but types of colonists, I hope and trust, everywhere.

But we are told, that British America under Confederation, would be indefensible; that such is the geographical outlines of it, the frontier so extended, access to the interior so far overland in winter, that it must fall an easy prey to the intruder. That may be so, but it remains to be proven. Far hence in futurity be the occasion which only can test the result of any effort to conquer British America; there is but one quarter whence a hostile attack need ever be feared, and so long as the present relations with the Empire continue, so long as the country remains a Province, no *casus belli* can well occur, except it be provoked by Great Britain herself. That must never be forgotten. With our present steam and telegraphic communication between the new world and the old, no embroglio can happen that could seriously jeopardise the relations of England and America without ample opportunity being first afforded for a satisfactory adjustment. And if it be so, that the great Republic has determined, soon or late, right or wrong, that there must be a passage-at-arms between the two countries,—and I am not one of those who believe in, or desire such a thing, but if it must be so, why let it come, and God defend the right!—England is not likely to seek such a quarrel. The Provinces know that their broad acres must surely be the battle-field, with all its horrors, at least so far as the land-fight would be concerned, and victory itself on their side would be all but ruin. Why, then, should they ever seek a quarrel with America? I am not disposed to speculate upon results, but while the Colonists themselves are content to stand by a frontier which is no longer in dispute, which for the most part has been recognised for well nigh a hundred years, it is hardly likely that the people of the British Islands—just when the Provinces are organizing for common defence, when they are adopting a policy which Great Britain has recommended—will bid a younger brotherhood, speaking the same language, proud of the same lineage, enjoying the same institutions, devoted to the same Sovereign, begone! No; No. When the separation comes, and that event, I trust, for many reasons, is yet far distant, it will be at the instance of the new Nation itself, and with the blessings upon its head, of the great old Empire, of which it is destined for many a long day yet, I trust, to be an integral portion.

But then the delegates, it is said, are seeking for a guarantee from the British Government for a loan of money to be expended in building an "Intercolonial semi-military Railway," and for other purposes. Supposing that to be so, would there be anything improper or unreasonable in such an application? At the time the late unhappy civil war broke out in the United States, followed almost immediately by the Trent difficulty, the credit of Canada was such that her £100 6 per cent. debentures here on the Stock Exchange were sold as high as from £113 to £115, and were eagerly sought for at that premium. The debentures of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick had touched about £113 per £100.

An angry feeling, as is well known, arose and grew in connection with that difficulty, and the course of policy pursued by the British Government in reference to the question of belligerent rights, claimed by the revolted States, that has not subsided up to the present hour. The peace of the two countries on more than one occasion was endangered in consequence, and the result has been rudely to shake Colonial credit at home and abroad. Close upon this unhappy event followed the Fenian disturbances in Ireland, which were forthwith transplanted to America, and the contiguous States of the Union have ever since been suffered to be a base of operations for outlaws and discontented vagabonds to assail the Provinces. The consequence of this state of things has been that the credit of all the North American Colonies has suffered most materially. From being at a premium as described, these securities have been seriously depreciated. Even yet, as is well known, the stocks of the Provinces are at a small discount.

All this, unquestionably, has been brought about by causes over which the Provinces have had no control. If then they ask that Great Britain should aid, not in constructing an Intercolonial Railway which on all sides is admitted as an absolute necessity for military and defensive purposes, but merely to enable them to obtain money at a lower rate of interest, by guaranteeing a loan of three or four millions—and which the Confederated Provinces shall, by an Act of their Parliament, first make ample and satisfactory provision to repay—would there be anything unreasonable in such an application?

Is there no precedent for such a favour? It would be inconvenient to raise this sum on Colonial credit alone, and it could only be obtained perhaps, by submitting to severe loss; but with an Imperial Guarantee, it can be had on terms much more advantageous to the borrowers. If it were a case of *res integra*, such are some of the reasons which might be advanced in favour, but it is not so.

The Provinces have at this moment the faith of the British Government, pledged by that late eminent and enlightened statesman, the Duke of Newcastle whilst he filled the office of Colonial Minister, extending for a term of years not yet expired, and ratified by his successor, and the Government of which he was a member as well, to assist the Provinces in obtaining a loan to construct this great national and indispensable public work. It is a fact, as humiliating as true, that for several months of each year, during winter, access to the ocean from Canada for most practical purposes is now over territory of the United States. But the Intercolonial Railway once constructed, and the case would immediately to a large extent be reversed. Not only would Canadians not be necessitated to cross American territory, but a large portion of the travelling population of the Western States bound for Europe, their mails as well, as also much of the fine and light goods destined from Europe to the Great West, would take the Intercolonial as the quickest and much the shortest route. At present, for six months of the year, the entire of British America has but a single steamer once a fortnight touching their shores, calling on her way to and from Boston, being one of the subsidized Cunard Liners. Let the Intercolonial but be completed, making the connection between Halifax and the Grand Trunk—and less than five hundred miles will now stop the gap between Truro and River DuLoup—let this *quasi* national operation be completed, and by that route all passengers who desire the shortest sea voyages between the two worlds are sure to travel. Halifax is five hundred miles nearer Queenstown than New York, and three hundred miles nearer than Boston. How long, with the Intercolonial completed, before a tri-weekly line of steamers, instead of a fortnightly one, would ply between Halifax and this country? In the womb of futurity the answer to this and similar questions reposes; but looking at the effect

most likely to be produced by turning the great stream of trade and travel from its present indirect route to one so much shorter and more direct, and a very early day it is hoped will realize, and more than realize, the highest hopes and expectations of all interested.

There is yet another reason that might be adduced why the Provinces, if need required, should be assisted in the way suggested to perfect their defences. But for that ill-advised concession, contained in the Ashburton Treaty, negotiated by the Imperial Government, and by which a large portion of the finest part of New Brunswick was summarily transferred to the State of Maine, access from Canada to the Ocean in winter would not have been anything like as difficult as it is. Without seeking, however, to revive unpleasant recollections—in view of the past then, as well as of the future, it is to be hoped that the strong cord that now binds these Provinces to the Parent Government, is, by Confederation, destined to be still further strengthened.

Goldwin Smith, in one of his essays has, ventured to assert "That the greatness of England lies, not in her Empire, but in herself." That may be so, but it is not too readily to be taken for granted. He who familiarises his mind with the prelections of the Oxford Professor, who thinks England can afford to part with the North American Provinces, must, as the Professor intimates, be prepared to include the West Indies in the concession as well. And, if without any transatlantic possessions, without even a coaling station from Hudson's Bay to Cape Horn, England's prestige remains, why or wherefore should Australia, New Zealand, or even the East Indies, be retained? But, are Englishmen prepared for this new Anti-colonial theory? It is not yet five years since the Professor wrote his first letter on Colonial Emancipation, and, since then, many unexpected and startling events, things not dreamed of in his philosophy, have already transpired.

The relation of the Colonies to the mother-country Professor Smith, in one of his letters, designates a state of "Childish thralldom." In another, he asserts that "They enjoy all the substantial attributes of nationality." Neither of these statements is correct, and could he have foreseen that the Government of the United States would have so soon been erecting a Chinese wall of protection about the Republic,

in shape of a Tariff to exclude the manufactures of Great Britain and all other nations, he would, I apprehend, have qualified many of his opinions. If what the *Times*, however, affirmed in 1862, and which needs no verification, viz.: that "Our Colonies are our best customers"—and to which Mr. Smith took such sharp exception—be not strictly true, it will hardly now be contended, in the face of what is transpiring, that the reverse is the fact, or that such will not ere long be realised.

In seeking to unite and be consolidated the British Provinces of America are quite in harmony with the spirit of the age. But what distinguishes this union movement from every other attempt at combination, is the voluntary principle that underlies it. The Colonies that are seeking Confederation have themselves originated the scheme. In a time of profound peace, with no impending danger, no hostile aggression forcing upon them the necessity of immediate action for common safety, these British Provinces attracted towards each other by a common sympathy, by mutual interchange of the kindest sentiments, decided out of five separate small communities, to construct one—one desirable for habitation as an emigrant's home, blessed with the largest measure of freedom civil and religious, and within a week's steam voyage from Albion's shores. In Nova Scotia, among the nearest of the group, gold mines and coal mines lie almost side by side. More than half-a-million tons of the finest bituminous coals were raised during the last year within this Province. The markets of New York and the New England States are already largely supplied with them; and the business is as yet but beginning to be developed. The Island of Cape Briton, and all the Eastern and Northern side of Nova Scotia, with a large portion of New Brunswick adjoining, is now demonstrated to be a vast coal field, destined to be the grand fuel-yard of British America, and a large portion of the United States as well. The gold mines are paying handsomely wherever experience and skill, and capital combined, are brought into operation. The extended magnificent "forests primæval" of New Brunswick, with her agricultural and mineral capabilities, the St. Lawrence, the Canals, and the Canadian Lakes,

already navigable for more than a thousand miles, with the greatest wheat-growing region in the world, stretching inland as it does almost indefinitely, even to the utmost verge of civilization, and all well-nigh surrounded with the finest fishery on the face of the globe—this is the country, this is the future Empire, that is now merely waiting the fiat of the British Parliament henceforth to become one and indivisible. Nor is this a fancy picture. Let the man, who of all others, ought not to be suspected of partiality towards Canada, at least, let Mr. Howe himself be put into the witness-box to testify about the country. Of it he has already deliberately written thus:—

“The question has been put to us twenty times a day, ‘What do you think of Canada?’ and as it is likely to be many times repeated, we take this early opportunity of recording our convictions that it is one of the noblest countries it has ever been our good fortune to behold. Canada wants two elements of prosperity which the *Lower Colonies possess*,—open harbours for general commerce, and a homogeneous population,—but it has got everything else that the most fastidious political economist would require. * * * The mere extent of the country would not perhaps impress the mind so strongly if there was not so much of the vast, fine magnificent, the *national*, in all its leading features. It is impossible to fancy that you are in a Province—a Colony. You feel at every step that Canada must become a *great nation*, and at every step you pray most devoutly for the descent upon the country of that wisdom and foresight and energy which shall make it the great treasury of British institutions upon this continent, and an honour to the British name. * * * Canada is a country to be proud of, to inspire high thoughts, to cherish a love for the sublime and beautiful, and to take its stand among the nations of the earth, in spite of all the circumstances which have hitherto retarded, and may still retard, its progress. * * * Chief among the resources of Canada must be regarded her boundless tracts of rich and fertile land. For many miles below Quebec the soil is excellent, and the further you proceed onward the better it becomes, until, in the Western regions of Upper Canada, it is found inferior to none on the continent of America. No man can estimate the numbers that Canada could feed, or form the least idea of what its agricultural export might be, if all the land capable of improvement were under cultivation.”

Mr. Howe now complains that Lord Monk should have used the word “nationality,” and yet thrice in this short extract he speaks of Canada as a *nation*. And it is just because the Lower Provinces, among other things, “possess the open harbours” which Canada requires, and because Canada has these “boundless tracts of rich and fertile lands,”

and because "no man can estimate the numbers that Canada could feed," it is pre-eminently for these reasons that a Union of the whole under one grand Confederation has become so desirable. But it has been objected that this desire for union is, on the part of Canada, an act of "spoliation." Unfortunately, too, for the author of that assertion, the modern idea of Union did not originate with Canada. It hails from Nova Scotia.

If then these several young thrifty and rising communities think it for their interest hereafter to be one; if not only the large overwhelming majority of the population themselves—nine-tenths probably of the whole, have so decided, but the foremost men also of the late, as well as of the present Imperial Government, and the entire press of this country almost without exception, so far as it has spoken, counsel Union and Confederation, and desire that these Provinces should be joined together, who is he, and who are they, that insist upon keeping them asunder?

An objection has been started by some persons as to the method pursued for bringing about this contemplated union. A class who affect to be, *par excellence*, the people's protectors, who for the time being happen to be heading the opposition in Canada and Nova Scotia, are clamorous for a *plebiscitum*, or at least an appeal to the electors, upon a dissolution of the Legislature of these two Provinces. In New Brunswick two such appeals have actually taken place within a twelvemonth or so; the latter entirely reversing the former, and pronouncing almost unanimously in favour of Confederation. The popular decision, however much deserving of respect, will henceforth hardly be considered as even approaching infallibility in a Province, after what occurred in New Brunswick. In March 1865, on a distinct issue of Confederation or not, the people returned a House of Assembly pledged against it *thirty*, for it *eleven*. In 1866 the same Electors, with the same franchise, and the same issue submitted, the recently elected House having been dissolved, returned a new one—pledged for Confederation *thirty-three*, against it *eight*! *Vox populi, vox Dei*, is therefore scarcely to be received as orthodox in this British North American Province, unless the presiding deity is at best a very changeable being.

But I have yet to learn, that one branch of the Legislature, though

it be the popular one, in a Province possessing Constitutional Government after the British model, can speak for the other two branches, or must of necessity be obeyed. Where an affirmative proposition is submitted to any Legislature consisting of two Houses and the Representative of Majesty, the consent of all is required to bind. That has already been done in three at least out of the five British North American Colonies, and it is not contemplated, I apprehend, to provide in the Act of Confederation for any other than those that voluntarily seek admission into the Union.

The Opposition leaders, however, require more than this. They take the ground, that when it is proposed to make a change in the Constitution, before the Legislature can deal with it, if there be not a plebiscitum, there must be a reference at least to the Electors, and their special sanction obtained. This is specious enough, and almost sure to be popular with an Opposition. But is it sound? It may under certain circumstances be prudent to do such a thing, but is it indispensable? After some organic change of the Constitution specially affecting the rights of the Electors, there is much reason in ordering an appeal to the people; but what authority is there, or what precedent has been, or can there be produced, to show that under the British Constitution there must be an appeal to the Electors preparatory to a change of the Constitution?

If such had been the received opinion here in England, if any such principle had existence, how came Earl Russell and Mr. Gladstone to introduce to Parliament their sweeping Reform Bill without the measure first having been submitted to the people themselves at the hustings. It was not done. Indeed, it cannot be pretended that the Electors of Great Britain had passed upon the measure, for it was kept a profound secret until after Parliament met. More than that, the question of a Reform Bill cannot be said to have been before the country at the time of the last General Election; and had Lord Palmerston survived, the probability I presume is, that the measure of last Session would not have been introduced at all. There is therefore, I maintain, no authority whatever for the position assumed, that there should of necessity have been a dissolution of the Parliaments of Canada and Nova Scotia, preparatory to the action of the Legislature

of the Provinces on this, or any other subject submitted to their consideration.

Such at all events was the opinion of the late lamented Duke of Newcastle, and such also is the view of this subject taken by his successor, Mr. Cardwell, as severally expressed in despatches easy of reference, in which they recommended the very method of procedure which has been adopted to the letter. Already, as intimated, the people, speaking through their lawfully elected representatives, have, by majorities of nearly two-thirds to one-third, pronounced in favour of Confederation. But suppose the matter were referred back to them mixed up with all the side issues inseparable in such a case, and a lean majority of one or two were obtained, would that be satisfactory? I fear, however, that I have devoted more time and attention to this feature of the subject than it merits, but as a great deal of stress has been laid upon it by those who oppose the Union of the Provinces, I have thought proper to expose the fallacy, as well as the unconstitutionality of such a position.

Another objection has been started, namely, that the power of Parliament does not extend to a case like that under consideration, and that it is not competent for the Legislature of any country to reconstruct its constitution. Other writers on this subject, whose names appear in pamphlets published, have shown from the highest authorities, that the powers of Parliament are all but unlimited. And when we bear in mind that the Septennial Act, under which the Parliament of Great Britain has met for a long period past, was the work of a Parliament chosen only for a period of three years, it would be difficult to draw a line anywhere, and say thus far shall a Legislature go, and no further. It is but the other day the Legislature of Jamaica, by its own resolve deliberately struck down the Constitution enjoyed, and, instead, asked and accepted a new and an entirely different system of Government, which is now actually in operation. There is a great diversity of opinion about what has transpired in Jamaica, but I am not aware that the power of the Colonial Parliament to surrender its Constitution, or of the Imperial Parliament to provide a substitute for it, has ever been called in question by

any statesman or Constitutional writer, of any party. In the face of all this then, are we to accept the *ipse dixit* of a disappointed, dissatisfied Nova Scotian who gravely propounds that Canada, Nova Scotia, or any other Colonial Legislature does not possess the power to amend, or modify or reconstruct its own Constitution. In France, in the United States, and elsewhere, matters may be managed differently; but where British Institutions obtain, the people can only speak by and through the representatives they themselves have chosen. They may instruct their representatives by petitions addressed to them, and by other means; but they cannot disobey the laws, nor counteract the resolves of those whom they themselves have selected as depositaries of their powers, and trustees to represent them during the limited term of their offices. Beyond all controversy the legality of the proceedings adopted for bringing about a union of the Provinces is undeniable, and if so, the only other question open for consideration is, will it conduce to the benefit of the Provinces, and of the Empire, that Confederation shall be accomplished?

So far as the Provinces themselves are concerned, they have responded in the affirmative. The people to be immediately affected by the measure have well and maturely considered the subject; their representatives—a large majority of them, who can only be supposed to reflect their wishes and sentiments—declare that their best interests are identified in the policy of Union. The second branch of the respective Legislatures, who for the most part are nominees indirectly of the people, that is to say, hold their appointments for life under nomination of the Crown recommended by its advisers,—they with a unanimity in all the Provinces, perhaps greater even than the peoples' houses, they too have decided in favor of Confederation.

As a rule, these as a class are men chosen for, and possessing large stake in the respective Provinces. They hold the same relation to the other branches, at least in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and partially so in Canada, that life Peers would in this country; and when out of eighteen Legislative Councillors in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick respectively, alike independent of the people and the Crown, thirteen have actually voted for Confederation, and but five against, surely it must be

conceded that unless some strange unaccountable hallucination has taken possession of these respective bodies, acting as they have done independently of each other, Confederation is a measure identified with the best interests of the Provinces themselves, and one that ought not to be unnecessarily withheld or delayed for a single day. Who so competent to judge of the necessity and value of Union as the people of the Provinces themselves? Why then should any doubt be raised, or any suspicion be cherished, as to the motives of so many millions of people whose future depends upon the success of the great measure under consideration? From Sydney to Sarnia, from the Bay of Fundy to the Bay of Hudson, there is but one prevailing sentiment of loyalty towards the Sovereign of these realms. The prayers of the people there, as here, ascend for her welfare. In the history of England, her laws and her institutions, we claim a common property. We speak, for the most part, the same language, we sing the same songs, and we cherish the same national traditions and reminiscences. Our forefathers were familiar with the sights and scenes that the people of these Islands hold most dear, and all the great achievements that reflect honour upon the memory of the patriots and heroes of former days we, too, recount with pride and pleasure. England's National Anthem is ours. We know no other. The very nursery-rhymes, as well as the festive songs of her palaces and princely halls, are sung in the cottages and farm-houses of every portion of British America. The statesmen of England, her orators, her jurists, her poets, her scholars, her Press, and her benevolent institutions, are the models we imitate; and, as descended from the same stock, those of our youth who have never set foot upon these shores, yet instinctively, as it were, learn to call Great Britain "HOME," and these Islands "THE MOTHER COUNTRY."

To the people of England then we appeal, and say if not exactly in obedience to your bidding, yet certainly complying with your recommendation, as expressed by the foremost men of the Empire, the British North American Provinces now approach your Government and Parliament, with a measure, a scheme, the draft of an Act of Parliament, by which they seek to be united. Such a spectacle the world was never before privileged to behold. No

precedent in the history of nations can be found where the outlying fragments of an Empire, sinking their mutual rivalries and petty jealousies, agreed to unite and become consolidated, to contribute their fair quota for common protection and defence, and in their newly acquired aspect to maintain their allegiance to the parent state. In order to accomplish such a purpose it may well be supposed that leading rival statesmen of the several Provinces have been called upon to make great personal and political concessions and sacrifices. Such has been the case, and without it by no possibility could the success that has attended this great effort have been secured. And will you, will the people of Great Britain—will her Parliament or her Government, at this stage, coldly and suspiciously regard a measure and a mission they have all along encouraged? Will they say to the representatives of four millions of people now here in England, intent on the accomplishment of a project, with which the interests of half a Continent are identified, will they say—retire for the present, and return, and we will hear you at some more convenient season? Most assuredly not. No suspicion lurks in the minds of any of those who have been entrusted with the high and delicate duties of settling with the Government and Parliament the details of the Act of Confederation, which is to perfect the contemplated Union, that such is be the upshot of the matter. No reason exists for supposing that such a reply will be given; on the contrary, the press of this country as a whole, and almost without exception,—the great metropolitan organ leading,—has had nothing but kind words of encouragement for all engaged in bringing about Confederation, and of approval of the project itself. If, however, on the contrary, and at this stage of progress, by severe exactions, captious objections, or technical exceptions, a disposition should be manifested to bluff off the delegates, to undervalue their mission, or to cripple them by withholding such reasonable countenance or aid as may be indispensable to work out the project, then, depend upon it, at these Imperial gates no messengers from British America will ever return to knock. Then indeed in every state of the American Union, from Maine to Mexico, there would be high holiday, and joy and rejoicing. Then, the policy of abrogating the reciprocity treaty would be considered as

having been crowned with success. Then rude hands would be laid forthwith on the garden fisheries of the world, and yet more exclusive tariffs and protection be exacted. Bonding warehouse regulations would be repealed, and along the entire extended frontier, shouts of derision would ascend, to the mortification and intense annoyance of those who should persist in sacrificing their interests at the shrine of their loyalty. Then too, in its turn, would Fenianism, unmasked, all along the borders, take courage and re-organise for some new and daring deed of lawlessness, and the common enemy would triumph over a disheartened population, keenly smarting under the effects of such an unnatural, unpatriotic policy. The lapse of a few weeks, a couple of months at farthest, must now settle all doubts as to the success of one of the most important questions of the century; and without any doubts or gloomy forebodings whatever, the delegates from Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and those whom they represent, will await the determination of that august assembly, whose ratification alone is now required to consummate a Union of the British North American Provinces.

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