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BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

II.

LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

THE EARL OF CARNARVON

BY

Mr. Joseph Howe, Mr. William Annand, and
Mr. Hugh McDonald,

STATING THEIR

OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME OF UNION

OF THE

BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty,
8th February 1867.



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LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

The EARL OF CARNARVON by Mr. JOSEPH HOWE, Mr. WILLIAM ANNAND, and Mr. HUGH McDONALD, stating their OBJECTIONS to the PROPOSED SCHEME of UNION of the BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

London, 25 Saville Row, January 19, 1867.

As we learn by the newspapers that the Delegates sent hither from Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick have agreed upon a plan of Confederation, and as we know that they are framing the draft of a bill, which they intend to ask Her Majesty's Ministers to carry through Parliament at the approaching Session, the undersigned cheerfully avail themselves of the permission, kindly given by your Lordship, to place before Her Majesty's Government the views of those they represent. Referring to the credentials named in the margin, and to the addresses, petitions, and pamphlets to be found in the Appendix, they would premise with all respect, that though it might for some reasons have been convenient to have had before them the resolutions of the Conference, or a draft of the bill, as their opposition is based upon the general policy of the measure, and on the mode of proceeding recommended, irrespective of mere details, they are content to discuss the subject without them. The undersigned assume that the scheme prepared at Quebec in 1864, has not been materially changed, and that it is intended to ask Her Majesty's Government to bind some or all the Provinces to accept a modification of that scheme by an arbitrary Act of Parliament; before a measure thus prepared in London has been submitted to the people, or even to the Legislatures of the Provinces, whose rights, revenues, and allegiance it is so seriously to affect; and before the local institutions, under which the inhabitants of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are expected to live, when their constitutions are thus overthrown, have been constructed.

Credentials

The undersigned will be only too happy to learn that they are in error upon either of these points, that intercourse with Her Majesty's Ministers, or the strength of enlightened public opinion in the Mother Country, has induced the Delegates to abandon a policy until of late openly avowed; but in the meantime, they must argue upon what they have reason to believe are the true aspects and proportions of this question, as it is about to be presented for the consideration of the Responsible Advisers of the Crown. The magnitude of the interests involved will enforce a somewhat elaborate discussion, but the undersigned will endeavour to simplify the inquiry as much as possible by arranging their observations under separate heads.

Lord Bacon tells us that "it is not good to try experiments in States except the necessity be urgent and the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation." In this case is the necessity urgent? Here are four self-governed and contented Provinces, prosperous beyond all precedent. They possess within themselves the legislative powers necessary to affect changes, however fundamental, and the assent of the Crown is alone required to give effect to their legislation. Have they passed any laws that have been negatived, and if they have not, why should the Imperial Parliament be invoked to step in and do for them what they can so readily do for themselves? Would Parliament assume jurisdiction over Bristol in a matter affecting that city's rights and revenues in a case where "the necessity" was neither "urgent," nor "the utility evident," if it could be shown that the municipal powers were sufficient to effect the change? What would the Cabinet say to half-a-dozen aldermen who came here to ask them to pass a measure which had never been submitted to the Common Council, and upon which the aldermen themselves were afraid to test the opinions of the electors?

In this case two of the Provinces have voted the measure down with unmistakable unanimity, scouted, and trampled it under their feet; a third only asks to be allowed the

opportunity to express a decisive condemnation. The fourth gave an honest verdict against it. On the methods by which that decision was reversed, it is painful for lovers of freedom to dwell; but your Lordship is aware that in Jeffrey's time many a jury was induced to reverse its decision when threatened and brow-beaten by the Court. Turning from the Provinces to the Empire, of which, after all, they only form a part, it is apparent that this scheme will derange its whole political and commercial policy, introduce new principles of government, and impose upon trade, so far as the rest of the Empire has any, with four of these Provinces, additional duties, varying from fifty to a hundred per cent.

When responsible government was asked for, a cry came up from all the British Provinces having Legislatures demanding the change. Who asks for this? Canada desires it as a remedy for local distractions and disputes, which, by the exercise of a little patience and common sense, can easily be remedied. If the Canadians, having all the advantages enjoyed by every other Colony within the Empire, cannot work a union of two Provinces with skill and wisdom; if they are compelled to divide that they may govern themselves at all, is it not too much to ask that they may be entrusted with the government of four other Provinces? Nothing can be more satisfactory than the present aspects of the Empire, taken as a whole. The central authority is universally obeyed. Commerce ebbs and flows with the regularity of the tide, controlled and guarded by a power we recognize only by its aids, and not by its burthens. Within the circle of this wide Confederacy great families of mankind, unfamiliar with freedom, are ruled by administrators accountable to the most enlightened and just legislature in the world; while other great communities, peopled by emigrants from these Islands, govern themselves in due subordination to the central authority, and enjoy the most free commercial intercourse with each other.

All these prosperous Provinces cheerfully submit to one rule, which is universal throughout the Empire, that in every Colony the productions of the parent state shall be admitted in fair competition with those of every other and of all foreign countries. The framers of this scheme propose to break up this commercial system, and, what is even more hazardous, to reverse the Colonial policy of England, under which for a quarter of a century these organized British communities have been allowed to govern themselves. Are the "utilities evident," or is the "necessity urgent?" Her Majesty's Government, surveying the whole field of Empire thus sought to be unsettled, we trust will decide not. A single illustration will suffice to show the injustice of the change proposed. For more than a century the Maritime Provinces have had a prosperous trade with the West Indies, whose population take their fish, lumber, staves, and other productions, and send theirs in return. This trade, never interrupted by ice, employs our shipping throughout the year. The moment that we are hedged within the Confederacy our duties will be increased by fifty per cent. upon return cargoes coming from Colonies which traded with us before Canada was conquered, and whose inhabitants are as much British subjects, and our brethren, as are the dwellers on the St. Lawrence.

We have said that there is no urgent demand for changes in policy or in administration coming up from any part of the Empire. The only complaints that disturb the general tranquillity are made by the people of the Mother Country. What are they? First, that the Canadians have been for years violating the principles of free trade, imposing protective duties and taxing British manufactures. Will confederation meet these complaints? Will the great centres of British industry grumble less when their manufactures, highly taxed, are excluded from all the Maritime Provinces, and are replaced by Canadian goods coming in duty free? Will we have more means wherewith to support our armaments within the Maritime Provinces, ready and willing to furnish their quotas of men and money for defence, have all their surplus revenues swept away to keep up this costly Confederation, with seven Parliaments, for which there is no necessity? Assuming that a scheme of government could be prepared for the North American Provinces universally acceptable to their people, it would leave all the rest of the Empire to shift for itself, without the adjustment of a single question now occupying the mind of every thoughtful British subject. All the sources of weakness and irritation would still remain.

As one branch of the subject has been much mystified by these Confederates, and is but little understood, the undersigned will venture to call your Lordship's attention to some obvious facts which bear directly on the question of—

NATIONAL DEFENCE.

Should Great Britain be ever involved in a war with the United States, or with any European power, so far as concerns our interests, on the continent of America and the

neighbouring islands, there must be two distinct fields of operation. On the Pacific side we must be prepared to lose our possessions for a time if at war with the Republic, because in population, wealth, and the ready command of means of transportation the great state of California is far in advance of the Province of British Columbia, and besides, when the railroads, of which three are projected and one amply provided for by Congress is now under contract, are completed, troops can be thrown in from the southern and western states to strengthen and support California. There are two modes by which matters may be balanced on the Pacific side. If prepared to act promptly, we may take St. Francisco early in the war by employing a portion of our Indian army; or at all events we may, by reinforcements from our Eastern possessions and by naval preponderance upon the seaboard, be able to protect our own Province, destroy the Panama railroad and that across the continent, if it be finished, clear the American whalers out of the Pacific, and generally so harass and cut up American commerce all round the coast from California to the Rio Grande as to make war an intolerable infliction, whatever successes may have been achieved by the land forces of the enemy on the Canadian frontier.

On this broad field of operations Canada can give no assistance either to Great Britain or to the Province of Columbia. She has no railroads by which to send a man across the continent, nor a soldier to spare if she had; she has but 5,958 sailors and fishermen, less than she would require to block the St. Lawrence and make any show of naval force upon the lakes. If she had a telegraph to the Pacific it would be cut every hour of the day, passing, as it must, through a wilderness with no formed settlements to protect it, or, what would be worse, camp wires and local batteries, easily connected in 20 places, would enable the enemy to copy every message that might be sent. Sealed up by ice or by the enemy on all sides, it is quite apparent that Canada could count for no more, as an auxiliary in naval or military operations on the Pacific side of the Empire, than the buoy at the Nore, and it must be quite as clear that if the naval and military officers entrusted with the protection of our possessions on the Pacific were obliged to report to and receive orders from Ottawa, all our secrets would be known to the enemy; that the unity of command would be broken up, and our officers perpetually mystified and perplexed.

Even on this distant field of operations the Maritime Provinces would not be quite so powerless. As early as 1812-15, the privateers of Nova Scotia dashed with great spirit into the war which impeded their natural commerce and rendered the fishing grounds unsafe. Those fitted out from Halifax and Liverpool, in that Province, cut up the enemy's commerce and fought some gallant actions, even in those days. The Westphalls both Nova Scotians and now both admirals, were among the most gallant officers employed on the enemy's seaboard. Wallace, lieutenant of the Shannon, another Nova Scotian, broke his captain being wounded, brought the Chesapeake into Halifax, amidst the cheers of the loyal population, among whom his boyhood had been passed. These things were done in the green tree, but marvellously has this seedling from the good old British stock illustrated the depth of its roots and the vitality of its sap since then. It has sent Welsford and Parker to die before Sebastopol, Williams to defend Kars, and Inglis to defend Lucknow, in wars with which, strictly speaking, its people had nothing to do, and it has, in half a century, developed maritime capabilities which challenge from every thoughtful man "special wonder." A century ago the whole mercantile marine of Scotland included but 32,818 tons, less than the twelfth part of the tonnage which her vigorous young namesake owns now. A few years ago Nova Scotia owned more tonnage than all Ireland with her six millions of people, and was beaten by but four or five States of the Great Republic. She is now far in advance of many of the Powers of Europe. In a memorial, recently presented by the shipowners of the United States to Congress, we find it stated that there are more ships now being built in the Province of Nova Scotia, than in the entire Union. They give the reason, that construction is checked along their seaboard by high protective duties, while it is stimulated in Nova Scotia by low tariffs and a liberal commercial system. We may be sure that every effort will be made, as their debt is reduced to revive this branch of industry; and it is for Her Majesty's Government to consider, whether in view of these reductions our enterprise and industry should be cramped by imposing upon us the high protective system of Canada. Nova Scotia has now 20,000 fisherman and sailors, commanded by men who are familiar with the navigation of every sea. These hardy seamen turning their 1,000 ton ships into privateers, would make even the Pacific and the China and Indian coasts unsafe for the vessels of any power with which Great Britain might be at war, and could materially aid her in those distant regions to which Canada could neither send a ship nor a man. New Brunswick owns some fine ships, and could operate on this

Spain.
Austria.
Sweden.
Greece.
Russia.
Denmark.
Belgium.

distant field if she would. Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island could render effective service nearer home; but, being less engaged in the carrying trade would perhaps not adventure into the Pacific, but one thing is perfectly clear, that though the Maritime Provinces might aid Great Britain or that side of the continent, Canada could not; and that, for all practical purposes of dominion or defence, she might as well claim to govern Hong Kong as British Columbia.

Let us now examine the theatre of war as it would be presented on the Atlantic side. What are the teachings of history? In the old wars, Louisburgh, on the seaboard, was the French base of operations. This was the gate of St. Lawrence, and thence they made descents upon Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, preyed upon our commerce, and rendered the coasts of the old Colonies unsafe. Till we had founded and fortified Halifax we could not effectually control this formidable position. Though once captured by the New Englanders it was restored, at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and again more strongly fortified. With Halifax as a base, we had a noble harbour, where the land and naval forces under Wolfe and Amherst could rendezvous, and refit after Louisburgh and Quebec were captured.

In the revolutionary war, Halifax was our real base of operations, and at last, our only one, as slowly we were compelled to relax our hold on Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, and York Town. It formed a safe asylum for our broken fleets and armies, and for the loyalists, who were ultimately to infuse new life into the Provinces we retained.

In ~~our wars~~ with the French Directory, and afterwards with Napoleon, Halifax was again our base of operations. Thence went the convoys that protected our vessels, homeward bound, or carrying supplies to our islands and possessions in the tropics. Thence went the expeditions under Sherbrooke and Prevost, that captured Martinique, &c., and, at a later period, when the United States declared against us, thence issued the cruisers and privateers which cut up their commerce, and the armaments that seized Castine, blocked up the Penobscob, and split the state of Maine, one half of which we retained till the close of the war. The undersigned have no desire to disparage the patriotic gallantry with which the Canadian Militia, French and English, defended their frontiers during the war of 1812-15, but it is quite clear that the utmost they could do, aided by all the troops Great Britain could spare, was to hold their own. Their Government did not furnish a man to strengthen the Maritime Provinces, nor a ship to aid us in that stupendous naval war, in which the real battle of the Empire was fought.

Now let us first inquire whether these mixed naval and military operations going on in and around this seaboard base would have been much facilitated had Canada, which could barely protect herself, ruled the Maritime Provinces; and had the gallant officers who commanded our fleets and armies, and directed the dashing enterprizes by which we plucked the flowers of peace out of the nettles of danger, been compelled to report to and receive orders from Ottawa, and to consult persons 800 miles away.

Should war break out to-morrow, as we have communication by steamer every week and by telegraph every hour, the real centre of intelligence and direction would be the War Department here. Our weakest line of defence would be the Canadian frontier. Our real base of operations, both for offence and defence, must be Halifax and the Maritime Provinces in the North Atlantic. The chequer board of war will not be British America only, it will include all our possessions in the West Indies and around the Gulf of Mexico, it will include the rich fisheries of the North, and the whole American seaboard, upon which if we are ever to have peace our blows must be felt; and it must include our commerce in all the surrounding seas, with the summer fleets passing up and down the St. Lawrence, which the Canadians by any instrumentality or exertion of their own will be utterly powerless to protect.

Surveying the whole field of operations it must be apparent that to remove our base from the centre to one of the extremities and that the weakest, to compel the War Department to communicate with a commander-in-chief at Ottawa, who must write or telegraph back before anything can be done at Halifax, is to risk disclosure and delay over an additional 1,600 miles of distance, to break up the unity of command, to hamper and perplex four Legislatures and Governments, instinct with loyal devotion and activity, deliberating under the guns of British iron-clads, and in constant social and official communication with the gallant officers who need their co-operation. To do this will be to reverse all the traditions of the past, and to negative with childish presumption the teachings of that military science which it has cost us so much to form.

If disposed to undervalue the knowledge we have accumulated for ourselves we may borrow instruction from our neighbours. Three or four armies were employed by the Federal States for the suppression of the great rebellion. At first operations were

directed from Washington by the President and the Secretary at War, advised by such military officers as they chose to consult. This mixed political and military system, which we may, if we chose to copy their blunders, establish at Ottawa, was a decided failure. Political partizans, ignorant and incompetent, were entrusted with the command of regiments, brigades, and army corps. Shoddy contractors and jobbers of all kinds infested the departments at Washington, and obstructed every branch of the military and naval administrations. Hundreds of millions of dollars were wasted, and hundreds of thousands of lives were lost. But with all these errors the Government never committed the unpardonable one of abandoning navigable water as its base of operations; or thought of establishing the central authority, as we are asked to do, 1,000 miles in the interior.

When at last the political element was eliminated, and General Grant, a thorough soldier, was invested with the supreme command, he marched from navigable water on the Potomac to navigable water on the James, and during the last successful year of the war, his base was at City Point. Sherman commanded the army of Georgia and Sheridan another in the Shenandoah Valley as we might require an army on the Canadian frontier but the unity of command was preserved. Both these distinguished soldiers reported to and served under Grant, who held on to the seaboard, and from thence directed all the military and naval operations from the St. Croix to the Rio Grande. If, unfortunately, we are forced into a war, our base must be Halifax, not Ottawa. The Commander-in-Chief must be there in hourly communication with the War Department, and in the centre of the great theatre of operations by land and sea, for which he and the naval commander-in-chief will be jointly responsible. The army on the Canadian frontier will have its peculiar duties as Sherman's and Sheridan's armies had; but it will form but a part of the whole force, and must move in obedience to the orders of those officers, who alone, from the centre can survey and direct operations over the whole theatre of war.

The base being determined, is it not of the utmost consequence that the population around that base should be loyal and devoted subjects of the Crown? They are so now. In the four Maritime Provinces there are nearly a million of people. They are training a militia force of 100,000 men. They have over 60,000 fishermen and sailors. There are at this moment no annexionists or disloyal persons in this entire force. To draw these men away from the seaboard is to weaken our base, without materially strengthening the landward wing of the army. If disposed to go they must march 800 miles, or as far as from London to Vienna before they can reach Ottawa. But would they go? As matters stand they might, if satisfied by the presence of a powerful naval force that their seaboard cities were safe; but assuredly if dragged into this Confederation against their will, if the system of self-government and low duties, to which they attribute their great prosperity is broken down, and if their revenues are transferred and their franchises overridden by an arbitrary Act of Parliament, very few of them will march to defend Canada; and the serious question to be well pondered before this step is taken is, whether broken in spirit by this act of oppression, having lost confidence in the good faith of the Crown and in the justice of Parliament, they will fight at all. The undersigned know the Provinces well and they have no hesitation in saying, that the passage of such an Act within a few weeks of the time when by law the people should have an opportunity to express their opinions without waiting for that expression, or giving them a chance to protect their institutions by their votes, would be regarded by a vast majority of the people of Nova Scotia as a dissolution of the political and social compact which binds the Maritime Provinces to the Mother Country.

We have thus far treated the question of defence as it affects the Empire at large, let us limit the field of operation to the Provinces.

We are about to create a "new nation" a "fresh power" as the proposed Confederacy has been styled by the Governor-General of Canada in his speech to Parliament. We are aware that the Delegates who are here, and who suspect that to adopt too hastily these high sounding phrases might peril the 4,000,000%, are content to "do their spiriting gently," and like wise serpents to wear the Colonial skin till the warmth of England's bosom enables them to cast it off. But to suppose that half the continent of America, organized under one government and legislature, can ever be treated as a Colony is to cherish a delusion.

If it is intended to form a nation then we would observe, that allegiance and protection should go together. The seaboard Provinces have many thousand vessels, and smacks and small boats in any number from the flat that tends the net inshore, to the fifteen hundred ton ship beating round Cape Horn; all these enjoy the protection of England, and those who man them have cause to rejoice in her maritime supremacy. If stopped or questioned the Foreign Secretary must "know the reason why." If robbed or insulted,

in distant regions, there is the British Minister or Consul to protect them; if sick they are sent to Hospital; if wrecked they are relieved; and by a simple machinery which costs them nothing to keep up, the Provinces are charged with the sums disbursed. Clothed with his British citizenship, and with a small red flag at the main, a Nova Scotian circumnavigates the globe, trades with all manner of people, and treads his quarter deck with a sense of security that is perfect.

When he returns, he sails up the harbour in which he was bred, and delivers his vote with the consciousness that he forms part of a self-governing and prosperous community whose service is a labour of love and whose burthens are light.

For his British citizenship and for his Responsible Government he is prepared to make any personal or pecuniary sacrifice. But how will it be when he puts to sea with the conviction that the duties on every thing he brings back have been increased from fifty to a hundred and fifty per cent., that he is a citizen of a wretched confederacy, whose "drum beat" nobody ever heard, and which has not a war ship upon the ocean, or a minister or a consul with the slightest influence abroad? How will he feel when he returns and ascends a hustings whose proceedings are a mockery, to vote for a member, whose presence in a distant and hostile Parliament, is but a proof of his degradation.

THE INTERCOLONIAL RAILROAD.—DISCRIMINATING DUTIES.

But it is said by accepting this Quebec scheme of Confederation the Maritime Provinces secure the Intercolonial Railway. The undersigned can scarcely trust themselves to discuss this branch of the general subject, so selfish and unfair at all times has been the conduct of the public men of Canada in regard to it. Rightly estimating the value of this road as a great highway of communication, as an aid to the defence of Canada, and as opening a field for employment, which, if occupied, would strengthen the weak points of the frontier, Mr. Howe came to England in 1850, and spent six months in negotiations, the objects of which were to induce Her Majesty's Government to guarantee a sum sufficient to complete it from Halifax to Montreal, and to throw in upon the line the surplus population of the parent State, then burthening the poor rates or drifting into foreign countries. To this policy the Earl of Derby, then in opposition, gave his strenuous support. The guarantee was promised, and returning to the Provinces, Mr. Howe succeeded in combining them all in common measures to secure the completion of the road. Subsequently certain English contractors, who were Members of Parliament, and possessed of some political influence here, determined to profit by a large expenditure on a new field of operations. They organized the Grand Trunk Railway Company, issued a prospectus promising shareholders eleven per cent. for their investments, induced the public men of Canada to pick a quarrel with Sir John Pakington, laughed at the necessity for any guarantee, and commenced that series of operations by which the enterprise, after the fashion of the London, Chatham, and Dover, was turned into a contractor's road. Ten millions being extracted from the credulous people of England, and three millions from the Government of Canada, upon a large portion of which no interest or dividends have yet been paid. We pass over the rapid fortunes that were made out of this expenditure. It is sufficient to mark the fact that the unfortunate shareholders, after waiting thirteen years without interest or dividends, can now only sell their 100% shares for 20%. A road was made from Samia to the river De Loup, but that part of it which should have connected Lower Canada with the Atlantic was left unfinished. No population was thrown in upon the wilderness and weak part of the frontier, and millions of British subjects have since been allowed to drift into the United States, to become Fenians and a scourge to Canada; and it may fairly be assumed that some hundreds of thousands of them have been killed or wounded in the recent civil war.

The Maritime Provinces thus betrayed and abandoned, set about making their own roads in an honest and straightforward manner. Nova Scotia borrowed 800,000% sterling, at six per cent., and constructed railways from Halifax to Truro and Windsor, 60 miles of the system forming part of the Intercolonial Road. By the expenditure of another half million she has extended her eastern line to the gulf at Picton, tapping extensive coal mines, and bringing the capital of Prince Edward Island within half a day's distance of Halifax. She has now the whole of her portion of the Intercolonial Road under contract, and so buoyant have her revenue and resources become that she has been enabled to subsidize a company to complete her western line to Annapolis; and all this she has done with an ad valorem duty of ten per cent. without asking a pound from the Canadians or the British Government. By means of these roads offering inner lines of communication, she can in case of war, supply a British fleet and army

with food, forage, coal and timber, in any quantity, and in a week can easily concentrate around our dockyards and arsenals the whole Militia force of the Province.

New Brunswick became entangled with these English contractors, but shook them off at a cost of 70,000*l.*, and set about making her roads with her own means. She has completed an excellent road from St. John to Bay Verte, which opens up a fine tract of country, and secures her connexion with the gulf and with Prince Edward Island. This road, whether the Intercolonial is ever made or not, will be extended to the frontier of Nova Scotia, and when it is the three Provinces can lean upon and aid each other; and in case of war, the Commander-in-chief can throw the manhood of all three on any threatened point with marvellous ease and rapidity. These roads have been made without aid from abroad, and yet the credit of both Provinces has stood all summer as high as that of Canada, and often higher.

While the Maritime Provinces have thus done their own work and strengthened their own defences, they have not been indifferent to the peculiar condition of Canada. The menacing tone adopted by the United States, and the large armaments organized after the outbreak of the Civil War, were not unnoticed in the Provinces. Conferences were held with a view to the completion of the Intercolonial railroad, and delegates were in this country asking for aid to it, when the Southern Commissioners were seized, and England waited in solemn seriousness for an answer to the demand for their restitution. When the danger had blown over, Lord Palmerston's Government declined to give any direct aid, but the Duke of Newcastle was instructed to inform the representatives of the Colonies that a guarantee, if asked for, would be given. Another conference was held at Quebec to consider the subject in this new aspect, when the Maritime Provinces were made again to feel the ungenerous and unjust spirit in which the Canadians have ever been disposed to deal with this enterprise.

When representation is to be divided by their Quebec scheme they claim that it shall be adjusted by population. When money is to be expended upon a national work, they adopt a different rule. Assuming the road to be required for defence, then Canada, having the longest frontier, and in winter being separated from Great Britain, wanted it far more than either Nova Scotia or New Brunswick. For her it was a necessity in war, because she could not get aid by any other route. To us it would not bring a soldier if it was open, and our coasts, if they could be defended at all, could be protected at all seasons. Even in peaceful times the Canadians had no outlet to the sea but through a foreign country. We had easy access to all the world and no foreign power could restrain us. While the advantages of this work were all in favour of Canada, her public men drove with the Maritime Provinces a bargain so hard as to be eminently characteristic. The share which Canada should have assumed, taking population as the basis of this expenditure, was about six-sevenths of the whole. She would only consent to provide for five-twelfths, and our Delegates were compelled to assume the other seven, or permit the project to be again wrecked by the selfishness and injustice of those with whom they had to deal. This unequal portion was generously assumed by the gentlemen from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and it was arranged that a Delegation should proceed to England to adjust the terms of the guarantee.

Over the proceedings of that Delegation the undersigned would gladly draw a veil. The gentlemen from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick soon discovered that embarrassed by the defection of one or two of their supporters, the Canadian Cabinet only desired to break up the negotiation. The Duke of Newcastle, whose patriotism and patience were sorely tried, is dead. We wish he were alive to convey to your Lordship his impression of the spirit in which Her Majesty's Government were met by the gentlemen with whom he had to deal; but there is at least one officer in the department who cannot have forgotten what his Grace endured and feelingly expressed. Mr. Tilly and Mr. Howe, who would be no parties to a quarrel with Her Majesty's Government, laboured sincerely to bring the negotiation to a satisfactory conclusion. Mr. Gladstone met them in a candid spirit, and terms too fair to refuse being finally offered they closed with them, and went home, completed their legislation, and gave, by law, the securities which Her Majesty's Government very properly demanded. Not so the Canadians. They refused to provide for any sinking fund, by which the money to be advanced should be repaid; a fact, too significant we trust, to be overlooked by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer; and thus were the interests of the Maritime Provinces, so far as they have any in the Intercolonial railroad, a second time sacrificed and thrown over by these Canadian politicians.

With the history of this enterprise fresh in our recollection, and these facts breeding distrust and suspicion among our people, the Canadians come to us now and say, we will make the Intercolonial railroad if you will let us govern your Provinces, permit us to

appoint your governors, judges, and councillors, hand-over to us your revenues, and invest us with unlimited powers of direct and indirect taxation.

There are many railroads connecting England and Belgium with France, but for them all would the people of either country permit the French thus to deal with their Government, their patronage, and their revenues? There are railroads running from the United States into Canada, would the Canadians to secure these facilities have bartered away their self-government and their revenues?

The European and North-American railroad will soon pass through Nova Scotia and New Brunswick into Maine, but if that state were to make it a condition of her assistance to the enterprise, that she was to govern either Province, would not the proposal be treated with contempt? In the same spirit the people of Nova Scotia would reject and resent the offer to be governed and controlled by Canada, even if she proposed to make the Intercolonial railroad entirely at her own expense; but when it can be shown that under the Quebec scheme of Confederation more money will be extracted from the existing revenues of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick than will pay the interest on the whole expenditure, to say nothing of what they will contribute when their import duties are increased 50 or 100 per cent., and Canada has power over them of unlimited taxation; is it singular that such a dishonest proposal has aroused very just and general indignation?

Such a condition as this was never thought of by Earl Grey when a guarantee was offered in 1851. No such condition was imposed by the Duke of Newcastle in 1862, and at neither period would such a demand, if made by Canada, have been listened to for a moment by those who conducted the negotiations on the part of the Maritime Provinces. The Intercolonial railway will have its advantages as a means of communication between all the Provinces, but those upon the seaboard have grown and thriven without it and they can live and thrive without it still. In peace they have means of communication with all the world, and in war they can concentrate all their forces by means of the roads they have, and under any circumstances expect no help from Canada. So long as she is content to be frozen up for half the year, or to be dependent upon a foreign Government for a passage to the sea for her products and her people, the Nova Scotians are content to forego their share of the advantages of the Intercolonial road till it can be constructed on fair and honourable terms. We live in the basement story of the British American mansion and can get into the street, even though those in the attic should never construct a staircase.

The framers of the Quebec scheme expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer to go down to Parliament and ask for an advance of 4,000,000*l.* for the construction of this road, Mr. Gladstone promised but 3,000,000*l.* The sum has been increased by one-third on the faith of a most imperfect Canadian survey, with which Her Majesty's Government, that is to give the money, or the Maritime Provinces which are to pay the interest, have had nothing whatever to do. Four millions of money would build 16 iron-clads or would furnish a million of breech-loaders, which distributed over the Empire would greatly strength it in every part. Is it likely that Parliament will vote such a sum unless the case be clear? The Chancellor of the Exchequer may be reasonably expected to prove,—

1. That so large a sum is actually required.
2. That the security of a sinking fund, which Mr. Gladstone demanded but which Canada refused in 1862, is to be given.
3. That the interest is to be paid in fair proportions by the three Provinces, and not by the Maritime Provinces alone.
4. That Canada is so secure from invasion that the money will not be lost even should she be ever so honestly disposed to repay it.
5. That so large a sum may not, in the altered circumstances which we have to face, be very much better employed in the defence of the whole Empire than in giving facilities to a Province, which may be utterly unable to repay the money, or to protect the road when it is built.

All these questions may be answered to the satisfaction of Parliament, but if they are there is another that we suspect will task the powers of the whole Cabinet to win the approval of either House.

By our present colonial system, British manufactures flow freely all over the Empire, into Crown Colonies and dependencies, under such regulations as Her Majesty's Government may approve; into all the others under the privileges conceded in Earl Grey's Circular Despatch, which left to the self-governing colonies the right to regulate their trade as they pleased, with this single restriction, that they were not to impose discriminating duties, even in favour of the Mother Country. No more liberal dispatch

ever emanated from the Colonial Office since its first creation. The undersigned remember well when it was read in the Legislature of Nova Scotia, and the satisfaction it gave to enlightened public men and to all the commercial classes. This despatch struck down the last remnant of the old restrictive commercial system by which the states of Europe had, for centuries, hampered the trade of their plantations.

The system thus established has worked like a charm in every part of the Empire, and under it marvellous progress has been made in commercial development.

This system, fairly worked, is of universal application to the necessities of such an Empire as ours. Great Britain, repudiating protective duties and admitting food and raw staples free, gives to all her Colonies the benefits of the home markets upon the most liberal terms. The Colonies only imposing such duties as are indispensable for the support of their Governments, take all the productions of Great Britain in return. The Imperial Government providing for the national defence, might very fairly have given the British manufacturer the benefit of a small discriminating duty had it been so disposed: this was not done. The people of England relied on their capital, their skill, and their enterprise, to compete fairly with foreign and colonial industry, and we were left free, in all the North American Provinces, to purchase any article we might require, in the United States, in Canada, or anywhere else, and bring it home, paying no higher duties than we should have to pay had it been brought from England.

This is a most generous system, as the Provinces keep all the revenues they raise, and never pay a pound into the Imperial Exchequer. The American system is different; there the States enjoy free trade with each other, but pay all their import duties into the Federal treasury, which go to support the army and navy, and all the national establishments that, under our system, are maintained by the people of Great Britain. For some time, it has been apparent that the people of Canada were anxious to get the benefit of both systems. They tried discriminating duties upon their canals, and these, in connexion with the St. Alban's raid, cost all the Provinces the Reciprocity Treaty. They tried high protective duties, and only reduced them to within 50 per cent. of those collected in Nova Scotia, after the manufacturing towns in this country indignantly remonstrated, and when it was necessary to induce the Imperial Government to favour this other rather profitable "little game" of Confederation.

Before the Chancellor of the Exchequer goes down to Parliament to ask for these four millions of pounds, his penetrating intellect will have searched to the very marrow of the new commercial system, which, under cover of this Quebec scheme, he is asked to sanction. He will find it nothing more nor less than an attempt to exclude from half the continent of America British productions, by a discriminating duty of from 15 to 30 per cent., as the expenses of this Confederacy may increase, and to ensure to the Canadian manufacturer a monopoly of the consumption of all the Provinces the people of England have planted, and which they have defended down to the present hour. We are much mistaken if the Chancellor does not as readily penetrate the motives of certain persons in this country, who, having a disjointed and profitless contractor's line upon their hands, are most unfairly pressing on this crude scheme of Confederation, utterly indifferent to the nature of his responsibilities, or to the rights and interest of our Maritime Provinces. That the true character of the festive pitfalls, that these people have for months been laying for the success of their project, may be simply illustrated, let us imagine that the manipulators of the London, Chatham, and Dover, were to set about the hopeful task of persuading Her Majesty's Government to grant four millions sterling to complete their lines and restore their credit, charging the City of London with the interest, without ever permitting the liverymen to vote upon the transaction. No parliamentary sanction could be obtained for such an act of spoliation as this, and the undersigned shall wait with some curiosity to hear the Grand Trunk gentlemen in the House of Commons advocate the passage of an arbitrary act of spoliation, to apply to the Colonies which, were English revenues and franchises involved, no man would have the hardihood to propose.

FORCED UNIONS.—PAPER CONSTITUTIONS.

We are sometimes reminded, in these discussions, of the old adage that "Union is Strength." But is it always? Much depends on the nature of the materials, on the conditions and objects of Union, and very much upon the mode in which it is accomplished.

Belgium and Holland were not strengthened by Union, nor Austria and Venice. England was weaker than before when she ruled France from the Channel to the Pyrenees. The United States do not cover so large a territory as it is proposed to include in this Confederation. Whether arising from extent of surface, antagonism of

faces, diversities of interest, or the defects of a paper constitution, that great country, endowed by the Creator with boundless fertility, with natural forests and rich fisheries, with motive power that no skill can measure, with mines that generations cannot exhaust, has just buried a million of people, slain in civil strife, or worn out by the casualties of war.

Half a million of maimed and broken men wander through her towns, every branch of her industry is burthened with debt and taxation, and the Legislature and Government, in fierce antagonism, are tearing to pieces the paper constitution in which they can find no remedy for the evils that afflict them. With all these evidences before us that Union is not always strength, and that paper constitutions are not really durable, the undersigned would respectfully submit, whether it would not be wise to pause, at least till we can see how our neighbours remodel their institutions, before we begin tampering with our own.

We are sometimes told that the Saxons were weak under the Heptarchy and stronger when united under a king. This is true, and if the people of Nova Scotia were divided into tribes, under rival chieftains, it would be wise for them to follow so good an example. But let us suppose that the Saxons had been united in one Parliament, with one ruler and in friendly alliance with the most powerful monarchy of those days, and that the French had come over to persuade them to remove the Wittenagemot to Paris, to submit to taxation without restraint, and to allow them to appoint all their principal officers, what answer would our sturdy ancestors have given? their old war cry of "bills and bows;" and if Her Majesty's Government will leave us free to give the same answer to the Canadians, when they make us the same proposition, this question will be speedily settled, without their interference.

The Normans conquered England at last, and again our own history teaches us lessons of wisdom. So long as these two countries were united they scourged and impoverished each other; and it was not until little England had her own Sovereign and Parliament secure within her own borders, free from foreign entanglements and influences, that she began to develop those physical, intellectual, and industrial resources, which have made her the wonder of the world. We have great respect for the million of Frenchmen in Lower Canada, who live about six times as far from us as Normandy is from England; but yet warned by this page of ancient history, we would much prefer that they should govern themselves and let us alone. Our country is small, but the sea is large enough, and we will take our share of it, and carve out a noble heritage for our children, as Englishmen did before us.

The advocates of this measure often refer its opponents to the Scottish and Irish Acts of Union; but assuming the necessity to be as urgent and the cases analogous, which they are not, the Union of the Three Kingdoms would only prove that the Maritime Provinces might at some time hereafter be drawn together by some simple arrangements mutually satisfactory.

Those Provinces are larger than the Three Kingdoms; their population is homogeneous; their interests are the same.

The people of these Islands did not connect themselves with a large continental country that could always out-vote them, and which, having no power to protect them, might yet drain their resources and hamper their trade. Why should we?

The undersigned have no desire to be drawn into vexed questions of Scottish and Irish politics, but would with all respect invite the attention of Her Majesty's ministers to these marked distinctions. Ireland was a conquered country long before the union, and the sister island, being the strongest, had perhaps the right to settle her form of government. The Canadians have never conquered the Maritime Provinces, and have acquired no such right. Had the principles of government been as well understood sixty years ago as they are now, had the Irish Parliament represented the whole body of the people, and been content, as Nova Scotia is, to work responsible government in due subordination to the Crown and Parliament of England, who can say that the Act of Union would ever have been thought of, or that she would not have been a thousand times more happy and prosperous without it? But assuming the union to have been a wise measure, then we should be careful to avoid the errors by which it was marred at the outset, and which have caused irritation and disturbance ever since. The Irish union was carried by means which even the necessity can hardly justify, and a rankling sense of unfair play in the mode has underlain the whole politics of Ireland ever since. The measure ought to have some redeeming features, but seeing that it has led to two or three rebellions, that the country has been more than half a century in a state of chronic insurrection, that hundreds of thousands have died of famine, and that millions of Irishmen emigrate, to render our relations with a great country perilous, while those who

remain tax our highest statesmanship with social problems very difficult to solve, the undersigned would respectfully ask that no unwise experiments after the Irish method shall without necessity be tried in happy and prosperous Provinces, where the just authority of the Crown and the supremacy of Parliament have never been disputed.

Union was forced upon Scotland and England by conditions which may ultimately lead to a union between Canada and the United States; but in the case of Nova Scotia and that Province do not exist. The two nations had a common frontier, and for centuries they had been involved in raids, incursions, and great wars, by which their populations were constantly thinned and their resources exhausted. But Canada has had no wars with Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, or Newfoundland. Their frontiers are hundreds of miles apart, and until this Quebec scheme, which is rapidly training their populations to distrust and hate each other, was propounded, they had lived in peace and friendship, as we trust they may live again when these intrusions have been abandoned and are forgotten.

One great reason why the Scotch consented, if they ever did consent, to give up their separate legislature was because they had no colonies and but little foreign trade. Are we coerced by any such necessity? With all the great Provinces of the Empire, with these populous Islands open to our enterprize, and with solemn treaties clothing us in all foreign countries with the privileges and immunities of the "most favoured nations," what advantages can these Canadians confer upon us or take away that we should surrender to them our revenues and submit to their domination? The union of the two kingdoms was facilitated by the accession of a Scotchman to the throne, but we, who for a century have been fellow subjects of the same Sovereigns, are all united under one Crown to an Empire whose proportions we are most unwilling to exchange for all the hypothetical advantages which we are likely to gather when included, against our will, in this Quebec Confederation.

We are sometimes told that Holland derived strength from union, but after all her struggles she is no more free or happy than Nova Scotia is now. And why did her people unite? To free themselves from a larger country, a long way off, which drained their resources and denied them self-government. Holland is an example of what small states that love liberty and "go down to the sea in ships" can do; and we, who follow in her footsteps, ought not to be frammelled by connexions like those which it cost her the best blood of the country to throw off.

Switzerland is occasionally referred to, but Her Majesty's Government would do well to remember that Nova Scotia is as large as Switzerland; that her form of government is better; that our counties are more united than are her cantons, and that we enjoy besides the alliance and protection of a mighty Empire, which guards us from foreign aggression. Canadian domination would be as distasteful as Austrian domination was to Switzerland; and if established over our people without their sanction, a Gesler from the St. Lawrence might occasionally hear the crack of a rifle, and be reminded that men think of their bullets when their franchises are denied.

FEDERAL SAFEGUARDS.

There is one radical defect in this Quebec scheme of government which should not be overlooked. No means are provided by which the people, should it be found defective, can improve it from time to time. Whenever a change is required they must come back to the Imperial Parliament. The wise framers of the Federal Constitution of the United States provided at the outset the means by which that great instrument might be amended and improved, and they gave to the Supreme Court the power to decide all questions of jurisdiction and authority, between the general Government and those of the several States. No such tribunal was created at the Quebec Conference, nor are any safe-guards provided for the protection of the Provinces, should their local legislatures and the Parliament at Ottawa come into collision.

Though democratic in its origin, and in many of its aspects, the Constitution of the United States was wisely protected from the hazard of rash innovation. It cannot be changed or amended till the alterations proposed have been accepted by the people, and ratified by a two-thirds vote of both Houses of Congress. The people of every State have their rights guarded by similar provisions. The people of Connecticut have their rights and liberties thus guarded:—

"Art. 11.—Of Amendment of the Constitution.

"Whenever a majority of the House of Representatives shall deem it necessary to alter or amend this Constitution they may propose such alterations or amendments, which proposed amendment shall be continued to the next General Assembly, and be

published with the laws which may have been passed at the same session. And if two-thirds of each House at the next Session of said Assembly shall approve the amendments proposed by yeas and nays, said amendments shall by the Secretary be submitted to the town clerk in each town in the State, whose duty it shall be to present the same to the inhabitants thereof for their consideration at a town meeting, legally warned and held for that purpose; and if it shall appear in a manner to be provided by law, that a majority of the electors present at such meeting shall have approved such amendments, the same shall be valid to all intents and purposes as a part of this Constitution."

The people of Mississippi have thus protected themselves from surprise or hasty innovation.

"Mode of Revising the Constitution." -- That whenever two-thirds of the General Assembly shall deem it necessary to amend or change the Constitution they shall recommend to the electors at the next election for members of the General Assembly to vote for or against a convention. And if it shall appear that a majority of the citizens of the State, voting for representatives have voted for a convention, the General Assembly shall, at their next session, call a convention to consist of as many members as there may be in the General Assembly to be chosen by the qualified electors in the same manner and at the times and places of choosing members of the General Assembly. Which convention shall meet within three months after the said election, for the purpose of revising, amending, or changing the Constitution."

How mortifying will be the contract, should our constitutions, highly prized and successfully worked for a century, be overthrown by a chance combination of a few rash politicians, escaping responsibility by an appeal to Parliament, and over-ruling the electors, to whom the exercise of the franchise, on a question involving the highest interests and most solemn obligations, is to be denied. Let this precedent once be established and what becomes of the rights of every other Colony within the Empire? Let the impression go abroad, that any half-dozen politicians may come to England, and by influence, intrigue, or ex-parte representations, may overturn the constitution of any Province, without an appeal to the electors whose rights and revenues are to be swept away, and a thrill of doubt and apprehension will run through all Colonial society. The reliance, so universal upon the honour of the Crown and on the justice of Parliament, will, by this single act have been sapped and undermined. When no wise administration of affairs no evidence of material prosperity and social elevation, can be pleaded to protect us from revolutionary change, who will live in a Colony, that can get out of it, and what security for our rights and franchises will remain? That the relations of Great Britain with the United States have been and will be complicated by these unwise propositions the undersigned have not a doubt. No Fenian raids were heard of till after the convention at Quebec, and Governor Banks's Bill was the natural result of their unwise deliberations. The politicians at Washington were shrewd enough to perceive the weakness of this "new nation" and a few thousands of Irishmen, flung upon the frontier to be ultimately controlled by General Meade, were perhaps meant to test its resources. They also saw clearly enough that the terms offered by Canada to the Maritime Provinces, and to the population in central British America, if not insulting were inadequate and unjust, and General Banks's Bill was immediately framed to show to the Provinces that they had other resources if coerced and oppressed by the Canadians. If the Quebec scheme is laid aside we shall hear no more of Governor Banks's Bill, or of the Fenians either.

If it is not, then it may be as well for us to view dispassionately the range of temptation which it presents.

The Canadians seek to annex the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, without the means to organize people or protect it. The United States can, and they offer at once to divide it into two territories, and ultimately to incorporate both and take them as States into the Union.

The terms offered to the Maritime Provinces are far more liberal than those grudgingly yielded by the Canadians. Let us contrast them. By General Banks's Bill, Nova Scotia would at once secure free trade with 34 millions of people, whose markets are accessible at all seasons, instead of with three millions who are frozen up for half the year, and in summer can only be got at by a long tedious river navigation. They would participate in the American fishing bounties, so long as these last. They would secure protection abroad which the Canadians cannot give them. Capital would flow in from Boston and New York, to work their mines and employ their water power. Canada has none to spare. Turning from material to political interests how would matters stand? Nova Scotia would enter the Union as a State, clothed with the accustomed rights and guarded by recognized securities. She would select her own

governors, judges, and senators, uncontrolled by any Federal authority. All these, by the Quebec scheme, are to be selected for her by the ruling parties at Ottawa; and while she elected all her own State Legislators and officers, the Supreme Court would protect her in case of collision or encroachment.

We do not dwell upon the range of ambition presented by this great country to the ardent and the adventurous. We trust we have said enough to show that, as compared with General Banks's Bill, the temptations held out by these schemers at Quebec are "poor indeed." It may be said, "Aye, but you will have to surrender your customs revenues to the General Government." What matter? The Canadians are to take all but 80 per cent. per head. We shall not be much worse off when the balance has been taken. But then you must bear the heavy taxes of the United States. True, but the taxes will be reduced as the debt comes down, and in 20 years it will be reduced one-half by the natural increase of the population. In the meantime we shall enjoy protection, which the Canadians cannot give us. We shall have escaped from fraternity with those who would have meanly played the "big brother," trampled upon our rights, and denied us the exercise of our franchises, and shall have vindicated our love of liberty and fair play.

We have thus, my Lord, simply stated the case as presented to us by General Banks and the Quebec Convention. With all the temptations offered us at Washington, we ask simply to be let alone, or we ask to be folded to our mother's bosom, and not cast out into the wilderness of untried experiments and political speculation. Nova Scotia says to England, as Ruth said to Naomi, "Where you go we will go, your people shall be our people." This love and affection spring from a thousand sources that we need not linger to describe, but which it would be a fatal mistake to suppose can ever be transferred. You cannot endorse our hearts or our allegiance over to the Canadians as you would a note of hand, or invest a village on the Ottawa with the historic interest and associations that cluster around London.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Newfoundland, the oldest Colony of the group, is nearly as large as Great Britain. She has had her peculiar difficulties, which her people have manfully overcome; for a long period she was treated, not like a Province to be settled, but like a ship moored in the ocean for the use of the fishery; people were forbidden to build and live upon her shores; there was no settled government, and justice was administered by naval officers and surrogates who visited the harbours in men-of-war.

By-and-bye people were permitted to settle and improve; then came a resident Governor, and afterwards a Legislature and permanent judiciary. As population increased, and wealth and intelligence became diffused, the struggle for self-government commenced. Able men, suited to the occasion, sprung up there as they did in the other Provinces. Led and guided by these, the people ultimately won responsible government. No finer population exists on the mainland than are to be found on this island. These people are rapidly developing the resources of the Province, and are enjoying many privileges in their fine harbours and exhaustless fisheries. They will presently extend their agriculture, open their mines, and take to deep-sea navigation. These people have free trade with all the world; they can now adjust their tariffs to suit their own circumstances. They have no natural connexion with Canada any more than England has with Hungary or any other wheat-growing country in the heart of Europe. When it was proposed to annex this island to Canada, the people, with the instinct of self-preservation, shrunk from the proposal; the last House would not entertain the project. When the elections came off the electors returned a clear majority against Confederation.

This island is one of the outposts of England, and should never be given up while we can keep the sea; while we hold it we control St. Pierre, Miguelin, and the French fisheries on the banks, and can sweep their naval reserve at any time by employing for a few weeks or months the 38,000 fishermen and seamen that Newfoundland can furnish. For a clear and able exposition of the views which the people of Newfoundland entertain upon this vexed question of Confederation the undersigned respectfully beg leave to direct your Lordship's attention to their petition included in the Appendix.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Prince Edward's is a naturally fertile Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. At the fall of Louisburg and Quebec it became British territory. It was then a comparative wilderness, but was surveyed in lots of 20,000 or 30,000 acres each. Tickets representing

these lots, and numbered, were placed in a box, and some 60 or 70 persons who had influence in England were permitted to draw them, and thus, in an hour, became the proprietors of the whole Island. These proprietors were bound by their grants to pay quit-rents, and to settle their lands; but few of them did either. The Island was at first attached to the Government of Nova Scotia, but was organized as a separate Colony on the pledge of the proprietors that they would provide for its civil government, a pledge which they never redeemed. Population flowed in, and the lands were partially occupied, under a system which never existed in the other Provinces. The landlords claimed their rents, which the tenants often refused to pay, alleging that the proprietors had failed to fulfil the conditions of the grants. Thence arose agrarian difficulties and disputes which wasted the time and substance of the people. These disputes have lasted for 70 years. Thus perplexed, the progress which this fine little Colony has made is most creditable to its people, who have cultivated it extensively, have a large export to Great Britain, to the other Provinces, and to the United States, have battled for and established Responsible Government, and are now working through their agrarian difficulties. It may be fairly said of these islanders that, having had perplexities unknown to us on the main land, they have wrestled manfully with them, and have shown a capacity for self-government worthy of all praise. When the Quebec scheme of Confederation was presented to this people, but five men in the two branches voted for it. Who can wonder? Look across the narrow straits which divide them, to the Magdalens or to Gaspe, which belong to Canada. Those countries distant from the seat of Government are comparatively neglected and unimproved, while Prince Edward Island, enjoying self-government and the management of her own affairs, is commercially prosperous, and cultivated like a garden.

A general election is now being held in this Province, and so distasteful is the very thought of Confederation that no man on either side of politics can ascend the hustings with any chance of success who does not pledge himself to oppose it.

The undersigned cannot close this reference without expressing their admiration at the spirit displayed by the people of Prince Edward Island, when the Delegates from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick offered its constituency a bribe of 800,000 dollars if they would come into this confederacy. The public conscience of England has been a good deal shocked by revelations of electoral corruption at Totnes and Yarmouth, this summer; but the undersigned record with some sense of shame, the fact, that it was reserved for persons who profess to represent communities across the sea, where honour and integrity are highly prized, to offer to purchase the votes of a whole Province by bribery and corruption.

Few such transactions are recorded in modern history; let us hope that, within the wide compass of the British Empire, this may be the last.

NOVA SCOTIA.

We have already spoken of the material prosperity of Nova Scotia. We may, perhaps, be pardoned if we refer briefly to its political history. For nearly a century and a half after its discovery and foundation, the few British settlers who came into it, aided by Englishmen in the neighbouring Colonies, fought to defend this Province against the French of Canada. We are now asked to surrender it to Monsieur Cartier without a blow.

Halifax was founded by four or five thousand Englishmen under Cornwallis, who illuminated their houses when Quebec was taken. How many windows will be lit up when, by a wretched intrigue, and an arbitrary Act of Parliament, without the chance to deliver a vote or fire a shot in our own defence, we are transferred to the dominion of Canada?

In 1783 twenty thousand loyalists came down from the old revolted Colonies. They left their property and prospects, and many near and dear friends behind them, and they reinforced, by their activity and intelligence, the feeble progress of the early emigration. These men are all dead, and they died with the assured conviction that they had founded a Province where British institutions might be still preserved, developed, and respected. Could this "noble army of martyrs" for opinion's sake be assembled to-morrow, they would refuse to form part of a confederacy in which all the worst features of republicanism were to be illustrated, without any of its securities.

The later emigration came from the British Isles. On the national holidays the Englishman wears his red cross, the Scotchman his thistle, the Irishman his shamrock, the Welshman his leek, and the native race, sprung out of their loins, twine with these old world emblems the mayflower, the earliest bud of spring; which, like that native

race, seems to derive its freshness and aroma from the vigour of the climate. Nova Scotia will never agree to exchange for these emblems the maple tree and beaver of Canada. At their annual festivals what Nova Scotian would substitute "Rule Canada" for "Rule Britannia"? Nobody, who would not risk being thrown out of a window; and Her Majesty's Ministers will at once perceive, that to force upon our people changes, revolting to the whole current of their social life and political history, would be a blunder worse than a crime.

Burke tells us, that "The Constitution of a country, being once settled upon some compact, tacit or expressed, there is no power existing of force to alter it, without the breach of the covenant or the consent of all the parties."

We have shown that the Constitution of Nova Scotia has been settled by compact with the early pioneers, with the British settlers led by Cornwallis, with the loyalists, with the later emigrants from these Islands; and the records of your Lordship's department show how, for a century, in every form of documentary evidence, that compact has been recognized. Has it been forfeited by neglect or misdirection of the powers conferred? The material prosperity of the Province, already illustrated in this paper and in the documents and pamphlets included in the Appendix, supply the answer. Has it been abused by acts of tyranny or oppression? The very reverse can be proved. When the power of France was broken, a remnant of French Arcadians remained in Nova Scotia, scattered, powerless, feeble. For 100 years, since she has had her own Legislature, these people have never had to complain to the Queen, or to the British Parliament of a single act of oppression. Protected by equal laws, admitted to the free enjoyment of every common right and to social communion, these people have seen afar the national rivalries and distractions of Canada; and, secure in the enjoyment of all that they can desire, not a man of this whole race is in favour of the Quebec scheme of Confederation.

Some thousands of the aboriginal Micmacs remain in the Province. We have never asked the Imperial Government to give them presents, and they have never implored Exeter Hall or the benevolent societies of this country to protect them. Lands have been reserved for them, and every man can obtain his 100 acres when he chooses to claim it. Every occupation and profession, every school and every public position, is open to the Indian as to everybody else. Society welcomes the slightest indication of refinement and intelligence among these people, and the townships provide for their poor.

With the early emigrations from the old Colonies slaves were brought in at a time when bondage was legal even in the New England States; but our laws never recognized slavery, and these people became free. During the war of 1812-15 Sir George Cockburn commanding on the southern seaboard carried off some hundreds of negro families and flung them into Nova Scotia. There are now by the census about 5,000 of the descendants of these Africans in the Province. Have they been oppressed? No; but to its honour let it be recorded, that the Legislature has practically settled in regard to them long ago every question which is distracting the councils and disturbing society in the United States.

They were enfranchised in 1837. Under the operation of equal laws, which take no note of colour, when qualified they sit on juries. The schools, the colleges, the professions, and all public employments are open to them. Society does not exclude them, but, on the contrary, fosters any manifestation of legitimate ambition; and the people of England who purchased at heavy cost the manumission of their own slaves, may point with pride to the manner in which these poor Africans thrown by the storms of life into Nova Scotia have been treated.

Long before the Duke of Wellington brought in the measure for Catholic emancipation the Legislature of Nova Scotia admitted Catholics to sit, by simple resolution, in spite of the penal laws. O'Connell often expressed his admiration at this act of liberality, in advance of the public sentiment of this country; and we trust it will not be forgotten, should the people of Nova Scotia be reluctantly compelled to appeal to Parliament for protection.

Besides thus dealing with distinct classes and orders, how have our countrymen provided for their internal administration? Your Lordship can scarcely ride five miles in Upper Canada without being stopped by a toll bar or a toll bridge. There are but two toll bridges in Nova Scotia and all the roads are free. They have Stamp Acts in Canada, but we have not yet been driven to this refined species of taxation. With our low tariffs we can yet afford to circulate newspapers free of charge. Like everything else they are made to yield revenue in Canada. Can your Lordship wonder, when these internal taxes are to be imposed on us in addition to the 50 per cent. upon our foreign trade, that we should not be very anxious for Confederation?

The people of Nova Scotia provide for their poor, for lunatics, and deaf mutes; they light their coast and maintain humane establishments at every point dangerous to navigation. They educate their people, provide for every officer, including the Lieutenant Governor, train their militia, discharge the duties of hospitality, and when let alone live in peace with their neighbours.

The undersigned trust that, in view of this simple record, Her Majesty's Government will at once decide that she has not forfeited her constitution by any "breach of covenant."

But, it may be asked, have not all the parties consented to this change? and the undersigned would answer with all respect, that whoever may have consented, the people of Nova Scotia have not, and that they are the only persons whose relinquishment fulfils the condition.

The Parliament of England, with the consent of the Crown, can change or alter the constitution of this country, but will it be pretended that they have the right to annex it to France, in violation of the trust reposed, and without ever consulting the people? There was no law against parricide in Rome, and there is no law against such an act of treason in England for the same reason; but, if the attempt were made it is not unlikely that Judge Lynch would be suddenly elevated to the Bench, and that Temple Bar would exhibit some ghastly decorations as in the olden time.

We have shown that the people, in every State in the neighbouring Union, are protected from surprise even where amendments to their Constitutions are to be proposed. But they never dreamed of acts of treason such as that we oppose. Nobody ever imagined that the actual autonomy of a State would be threatened, or that it would be ever proposed, without the consent of the people, to merge the Jerseys into Pennsylvania or Rhode Island into New York. No such experiment has ever been tried upon the patience of our neighbours.

That the Parliament of England can deprive a Colony of its Constitution is not denied, but we have shown that, in this case, it is barred from the exercise of an acknowledged right.

1. Because the settled policy of the Empire would be disturbed, with great risk of dismemberment.
2. Because its naval and military defence would be weakened and endangered.
3. Because its free trade policy would be reversed, and discriminating duties against British industry established.

And we trust we have shown that the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia, if in full possession of accustomed powers, and not emasculated by a change of franchise, have no right to violate a trust only reposed in them for four years, or in fact to sell the fee simple of a mansion of which they have but a limited lease. Your Lordship would not probably recognize a sale of your estate by a steward employed to collect the rents and keep up the enclosures, even if he were still in your service; but if it could be shown that his agreement expired a year before, and that he had actually no authority to do anything, your Lordship would be as reluctant to recognize his fraudulent conveyance as we are to attach the slightest importance to anything done by a representative body sitting upon a franchise that had expired, and that should and would have been dissolved a year before if the Queen's Representative had exercised the prerogative in accordance with British and Colonial usage. We trust that Her Majesty's Government will, before a single step is taken, submit this question to the Crown officers, with the additional fact that two special elections having been run since the new law came into operation there are actually two gentlemen sitting upon the new franchise, whilst the rest of the House are sitting upon the old. We do not believe that such an absurdity as this ever disfigured British Legislation, and we also trust that instructions will be forthwith sent to eliminate the anomaly from the practice of the only Colony where it has probably appeared.

That the people of Canada are entitled to have this question sent to the hustings does not admit of a doubt. There may be a majority in favour of it, but if there is, will that majority approve of such a liberty being taken with their institutions, just on the eve of a general election, when their suffrages can be so easily collected.

Even if this were a good measure, when once the precedent is established that arbitrary Acts of Parliament, over-riding their franchises, can be obtained by chance combinations of intriguing politicians, assembled at the public expense in a London hotel; who is to protect the people of Canada, or of any other Colony from bad ones? What pride will Canadians take in any form of government that can be so easily overthrown?

But the people of Canada should be consulted for reasons purely English. A few

years ago certain politicians, desiring to escape the responsibility of deciding a local question, asked the Queen to select a seat of Government for them. The Imperial Authorities should have refused to interfere. In an evil hour the ungracious task was assumed, and Ottawa was selected. After an enormous sum of money has been expended in erecting public buildings, it is discovered that Ottawa is but a shabby imitation of Washington, upon which in three parts of a century, the national pride of a great and prosperous people has squandered untold treasures, without being able to make it bear a comparison with fifth-rate cities, created by the natural arrangements of Providence, and the unaided industry of man. The employes of Government and of the Legislature, lobbying agents in search of jobs, electioneering partizans, tourists who come to see the Capital, or swell the crowd at the President's miscellaneous receptions; with hackmen, gamblers, and negroes, make up, in a great measure, the society of Washington. There is no healthy independent public opinion, to watch, to weigh, to discriminate, as there is in London, or would be in Quebec or Montreal, Boston or Philadelphia. Everybody now admits that Washington was a mistake; and, if so, what shall we say of Ottawa, in which nobody that can get out of it, remains one day after the session closes? The Lamirande case illustrates the mode in which, under these circumstances, business is transacted. In selecting Ottawa then, it is obvious that the Government of the day committed an error. The Queen can do no wrong, and it is certain that Her Majesty, for this act, is the least to blame. Yet complaints, loud and general, heard everywhere in Canada, at this absurd selection and wasteful expenditure, are cleverly dodged on the stump and on the hustings, by politicians, French and English, who shrug their shoulders, and lay the blame on the Queen and her Ministers "over the water."

Should we repeat this blunder in a matter of tenfold the importance? Of all the responsibilities that beset his path a wise statesman would desire to avoid becoming sponsor for the practical working, by a population by no means homogeneous of a written constitution. The fox turned back when he saw the downward path strewn with bones; and what despots den in Europe is not strewn with the fragments of written constitutions? The Abbé Lieyas, if alive, would have supplied these gentlemen with a score quite as presentable as their second edition of the Quebec scheme, revised and corrected. But who would like to be accountable for the working? Commanding the Channel fleet is assumed to be a difficult task for a civilian, but, if a shrewd one, he would run down upon the enemy, and the skill and valour of British seamen would carry him through. But when it comes to working a new paper constitution by a mixed population, composed of different nationalities, who have just torn their old one to shreds, this is another affair; and no wise Englishman, if he can avoid the risk, will become responsible for the instrument, or the mode in which it may be administered. If this measure fails, let not the people of Canada lay the blame on the Government and Parliament of England, as they certainly will, if, with a general election impending, it is imposed upon them in hot haste by an Imperial Statute.

Nova Scotia, however, stands in a very different position from Canada. There is not the shadow of a pretence that her people are in favour of the Quebec scheme of Confederation, and it can hardly be assumed that they are in favour of another that they have never seen. Your Lordship will find in the Appendix to this paper evidence to prove that the former was generally distasteful to the Legislature and people of Nova Scotia. The evidence includes the speeches and declarations of persons friendly to the Delegates, and the resolution moved by Mr. Tupper, which in 1865 declared a political union with Canada "impracticable," and again pledged the House to seek a union of the Maritime Provinces.

The resolution under which the Delegates from Nova Scotia came here contemplated a Conference, in which all the Maritime Provinces should be represented. Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island refuse to send Delegates or to share the deliberations of the Conference. Is there any evidence to prove that, had this fact been known, the Legislatures, either of Nova Scotia or New Brunswick would have passed their resolutions? Is there any evidence to prove that either Province would consent to confederate with Canada, when in the absence of the two others, their influence would be so much less, and the vote of the Maritime Provinces reduced from 47 to 35?

But your Lordship will perceive that the resolution passed in Nova Scotia, while it gives these gentlemen power to frame a scheme of government, does not ask that that measure, when framed, shall be fastened by an arbitrary Act of Parliament on the people who would be bound by it. Mr. Cardwell directed that the Quebec scheme should be submitted to the Legislatures; your Lordship, we would respectfully suggest, can scarcely do less with any new one, and it would be a most ungracious act to submit such a question to a House sitting upon an expired franchise, and within a few weeks of

the period when by law the Parliament will be dissolved, and the whole people will be called upon to express their opinions.

Mr. Tupper admits that 16,000 persons during the last session petitioned the Provincial Legislature deprecating this change; not a single petition was presented in its favour. More than double that number have signed petitions to the Imperial Parliament praying that no measure may be passed that has not been submitted to the electors; we have not yet heard of petitions in its favour. Eight great counties have addressed the Queen, praying the protection of the Crown, and the other ten would have sent similar addresses had not the controversy been suddenly transferred to this side of the Atlantic. Three counties have already condemned this policy at special elections, and ten members who voted for the resolution under which those gentlemen have come here were asked to resign their seats, because by that act they had betrayed the confidence of their constituents.

The undersigned conscientiously believe that the Quebec scheme, or anything resembling it, cannot be carried in three counties out of the 18, and they would not be surprised if not a single constituency could be induced to accept it. They are willing to leave the question to the electors in the ordinary constitutional mode. Mr. Tupper appears to apprehend that his personal unpopularity on other accounts might interfere with a decision pure and simple. If this gentleman has made himself unpopular, why should he attract towards your Lordship the indignation of the people? Why should Nova Scotians be debarred of their rights? If he is afraid to trust the electors let the question be referred to the enrolled militia of the Province, who will vote it down by regiments. A great statesman, with an important policy to propound, goes to the country with a glow of honest pride, and challenges the decision that places the stamp of public approbation on his measures and confers distinction on himself. How is it that these politicians from Nova Scotia shrink from the ordeal to which men, confident in the justice of their cause, are so willing to appeal? Why, when they have sowed the wind in the Province should they seek shelter in England from the whirlwind, and ask to be protected by an Act of Parliament from the obvious responsibilities, that at the hustings and in the midst of their own people they are bound to assume?

But suppose that in this case there was a doubt as to the opinion of our countrymen, what then? A criminal in the dock, taken red-handed with all the evidence of guilt gathered about him, cannot be condemned on imperfect testimony, and the jury are instructed by the judge to give the wretch the benefit of the doubt if there is one. In this case we are not counsel for criminals, but for a great community above suspicion, whose record is honorable, whose hands are clean, and we ask in full reliance upon the justice of the Cabinet, that the recognized principles, even of criminal jurisprudence, may be applied to them. "Strike, but hear us," is the simple appeal of a great community of Englishmen who are most reluctant to believe that the safeguards on which they and their fathers have relied for a century are to be broken down.

The law of barratry protects the merchant from a fraudulent conveyance by the master. If a ship that may not be worth a thousand pounds, is thus guarded by our tribunals, shall it be said that a whole province may be sold, and its rights and revenues transferred, without the knowledge or consent of the owners? Is there an honest man in England who would be a party to such a transaction?

There is no evidence to prove that Earl Russell, Mr. Gladstone, or Mr. Cardwell, once convinced that the people of either or all of the Provinces were opposed to this great change would have arbitrarily enforced it. During the past six months the undersigned have mixed freely with Englishmen of all ranks and opinions; and, with the exception of a few persons, interested in depreciated railway shares and Canadian debentures, we have heard but one opinion, that no change so fundamental should be even entertained by the House of Commons till the measure came there, backed by the most unmistakeable evidence that it had been approved by the electors.

All the papers that favour Confederation, with a rare exception or two, discountenance the idea of coercion; and the undersigned, though in duty bound to argue the question in this form, cheerfully acknowledge that they never have had a doubt as to the decision of Her Majesty's Government. But, it may be asked, cannot something be done to improve the present Colonial system? To answer this inquiry would require more time and space than can be spared just now; and, besides, we desire to discuss this scheme of Confederation by itself. We may observe, however, that what is done should take the form of consolidation and not of dismemberment. The planetary system would not be much improved if Mercury were detached, and though Canada might be spared, the principle of dismemberment is unsound and ought to be discountenanced.

Should Her Majesty's Government decide upon organic changes these should be general and applicable to the whole Empire. If any sort of union is required for the North American Provinces then a short permissive Bill (a draft is included in the Appendix) might be passed, leaving the matter entirely in the hands of the colonists themselves, to form a union if they wished it, with the further power, which the scheme of the Delegates does not provide, to change, alter, or amend it from time to time without coming to the Imperial Parliament.

But something simpler even than this is all that can really be required for some years to come. The Governor-General might be instructed to summon one or more members of the Cabinets every summer, to form a Council of Advice to discuss intercolonial topics, to prepare drafts of such Bills as might be required to secure uniformity or simplify the system. These measures would readily pass the several Legislatures if they were deserving of support, and be very properly rejected if they were not. In this mode all questions touching railroads, currency, or tariffs, might be easily adjusted, and the quotas of men and money that each Province ought to furnish for the general defence might be just as readily arranged. Imperial interests would still be watched over by the general Government, and the Provincial Cabinets and Legislatures would then as now do the internal work of each Province. In a short time the hard feelings, growing out of this unwise experiment would pass away, and British America would once more present the picture of a prosperous family of States, offering neither offence to their neighbours nor embarrassment to the Mother Country, but illustrating to our republican neighbours over the way the value of British institutions.

Before concluding an argument, the length of which nothing could justify but the momentous interests involved, and the heavy responsibility that rests upon the undersigned, we desire to dissipate a fallacy often intruded into these discussions. It is said that the tendencies of modern political life are to the consolidation into large states of people having one origin, or speaking a common language; that the German inspiration is "the fatherland," and a great united nation; that the Italian sighs for a united Italy, with Rome for its capital. This is true; but let it be remembered that what the Germans and Italians dream of and fight for we now have. We are in full communion with all who speak our language in every part of the world (the United States excepted) we have one Sovereign, one flag, with the most populous, wealthy, and powerful city, the fountain head of our civilization, and the Pantheon where our sacred dust reposes for a capital. Our "father-lands," cultivated to the water's edge, are studded with picturesque ruins which revive the past, and palaces where all that can illustrate ancient manners and modes of life is intermingled with modern art, literature, and refinement; and, having all this thrown around industry that never wearies, enterprise that nothing daunts, and courage of the finest temper, are we to be told that we have a new nationality to construct, a home to seek, a capital to found? No indeed. When three or four small States withdraw from the North German nation, now in course of consolidation, when a few offshoots from Italian unity form an inferior confederation which embodies nothing, and represents nothing but their own vanity and want of judgment, it will be time enough for us to try experiments so doubtful, at variance with the logic of events which modern history records.

We have the honour to be

Your Lordship's most obedient, very humble servants.

(Signed) JOSEPH HOWE.
WILLIAM ANNAND.
HUGH M'DONALD.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Carnarvon,
&c. &c. &c.

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No. 1.

OPINIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

THAT the Quebec Scheme was understood to have been abandoned by the Government is evident from the remarks of gentlemen in the Legislative Council who favoured Confederation in the abstract, and voted for the resolution to arrange a new basis of Colonial union.

Hon. Mr. Anderson said,—“As to the mode of raising the local revenue, I differ *in toto* from the decision arrived at by the Quebec Conference.”

The Hon. Gentleman then stated that the net local revenues of Nova Scotia, arising from Crown lands, gold-fields, and Royalty on coal amounted in 1863 to 14 cents per head of the population; that the net revenues from Crown lands alone in Canada was equal to 24 cents per head, while in New Brunswick, including the extra grant from the general Government, it would amount to 54 cents per head, or nearly 400 per cent. more than we would receive in Nova Scotia. “Let an equal amount,” said Mr. Anderson, “be allotted per head, according to the population, to Canada, New Brunswick, or Nova Scotia. I ask no more, and will be satisfied with no less.”

Hon. Mr. Pinea.—“I opposed Confederation with the Quebec Scheme. I opposed it because I felt that the details of that scheme did not give equal justice to the Maritime Provinces, particularly to Nova Scotia. My colleague said that he was not very sanguine as to the mercantile advantage of Confederation. I do not myself believe that our financial affairs will be benefited by the change. I believe that this country is as well off now, perhaps better, than it will be under Confederation. I think that our delegates should contend that the general revenues should be distributed among the different provinces for local expenditure in proportion to what they contribute. It is not in a week, or a month, or even in two or three months, or a year that proper details can be settled for so important a measure; for when once settled it is to last for ever, and before it is finally consummated they should take a long time to consider, lest some mistake should be made.

Hon. Mr. Dickey, one of the delegates to the Quebec Convention, said,—“The Quebec Scheme will probably be referred to; but for the present it is laid aside, and the delegates to be appointed will start *de novo*. The new delegates will be appointed on a very different principle from that on which their predecessors, at the Quebec Conference, were appointed. In public I have never concealed my opinion on two important points. I had serious objections to the Quebec Scheme; and, second, that I was not so sanguine as to the benefits to be derived from that union as some of my colleagues. The hon. gentleman must not then expect me to act a part. I cannot and will not affect an enthusiasm I do not feel.”

Hon. Mr. Patterson.—“I do not intend to make any remarks on the Quebec Scheme; it has been pretty roughly handled by most speakers, but the Government by the resolution they have introduced have abandoned it. That an unwilling consent to the resolution was wrung from many members of the legislative Council is evident from the reported speeches. The name of the Queen, the Governor, and the Admiral were freely used to influence members to accept a policy which, it was said, had received the deliberate sanction of Her Majesty's Ministers. Threats, too, were freely uttered, that if the Legislature refused to confederate, the protection of the Imperial Government would be withdrawn, and the country left to its fate at a time when the Fenians were threatening an attack upon the Provinces.”

Hon. Mr. Pinea said,—“I am always glad to conform to the views of the British Government as far as possible, but had this measure been proposed to us 12 months ago, I should have either voted against it or remained neutral.”

Hon. Mr. Anderson.—“It is true that this province is at present very prosperous, but is it optional with us to remain in our present condition? I think not. The British Government have shown us that they are decidedly in favour of union, and that they expect us to assent to it. Not only does the Imperial Government urge this question upon us, but the entire press and people of England are urging it in every possible way. ‘Are we in a position to defend ourselves?’ Are we prepared to meet any invading foe?”

Several gentlemen claimed the constitutional rights of the parliament and people of Nova Scotia to pass upon any scheme of union that might be arranged.

Hon. Mr. Tupper said,—“The Resolution before the House asks whether the people of Nova Scotia wish Confederation or not. I think the question can be very easily settled. Let it go to the people,

and let them decide. To force people against their will will make a party in Nova Scotia which will last for ages. Let us take warning by other countries.

Hon. Mr. Brown.—"We have been told that England passed laws of equal importance to the measure now under consideration without special reference to the people. In my observations on a former day I challenged any member of this House to name any great measure which had been so passed, and there is none that can be named analogous to that before the House. No great measure has in modern times been passed in England which has not been repeatedly before the people, were not the Reform Bills discussed at the polls year after year. So it was with the Corn Laws and Catholic Emancipation.

"I cannot now believe that the people of this country will permit this, or any other measure to be passed without their consent, and that if for no other reason than that if such an attempt is made, they will bind themselves together to present their remonstrances and petitions at the foot of the throne."

Hon. M. McHefey.—"I am not opposed to union, but I am opposed to pressing it upon the people, when I know that so large a majority are opposed to it. In deference to them I feel constrained to vote for this amendment."

Hon. M. Patterson, a warm supporter of the Confederation, said,—"I take it for granted that any scheme which may be agreed on will be embodied in an Act of the Imperial Parliament. I think that that Act should not go into effect until ratified by the different local legislatures, and the delegates should be instructed to endeavour to have a clause to this effect inserted in the Imperial Act."

In the House of Assembly Mr. Bourinot, from Cape Breton, Mr. Miller, from Richmond, Mr. McDonell, from Inverness, and Mr. Campbell, from Victoria, assisted by their votes in carrying the Resolution under which the delegates now act, but in the Session of 1865 Mr. Bourinot, referring to the Quebec Scheme, said,—"Now that the people should be told that they were to have nothing to do with deciding so important a question as changing the constitution of the country, but that the House could deal with it, irrespective of the wishes of those they represented, was something most preposterous to propound in a country like this enjoying the privileges of responsible government, where the people are the fountain of authority. The Provincial Secretary must have known that the House was elected under our existing constitution, and could not change it without consulting those that elected them. Yet the Provincial Secretary was quite ready to strike down all the existing rights and privileges enjoyed by the people in order that he might march on to Ottawa. But far and wide the spirit of the people is asserting itself. Little by little the feeling arose which spread over the length and breadth of the province, and showed the Government that they must pause in their mad career. We are all familiar with Mr. Cardwell's despatch, how heartily he approved of it. The Provincial Secretary told us that the English Government were in favour of it, and that, therefore, we must adopt it; that if we did not England would withdraw her protection from us by degrees. But it must be remembered that Mr. Cardwell's impression was derived from the same source that prepared this grand scheme at Quebec. I have no doubt that these gentlemen impressed upon the Colonial Secretary's mind the moment the local legislatures met they would adopt the scheme. No doubt the opinion in England was that the gentlemen who acted as delegates at the Convention represented the public opinion of these Maritime Provinces, but I repel the idea. They did not represent the public sentiment on this question at all."

Mr. Miller, in the same Session of Parliament, said,—"He need not remind the House that one of the most momentous questions that ever agitated the public mind was then under discussion, the question of a union of the British North American Colonies. He thought that, in view of the aspect that question had lately assumed—in view of the unmistakable evidence of public opinion which had recently been given—that there was but little room to doubt that nine-tenths of the people of Nova Scotia were opposed to the scheme propounded by the Canadian delegates."

In proposing to the Government during the last Session to adopt the mode by which the present delegation was appointed, Mr. Miller said,—"I therefore ask the leader of the Government, and through him the advocates of the Quebec Scheme, whether they are so wedded to that scheme as to be unable to entertain the proposition I, as a friend of colonial union, now make. The object of my present movement is, and I fearlessly avow it, to defeat the Quebec Scheme."

In another part of his address on that occasion he said,—"To that scheme I am now as hostile as I have ever been. I believed it to be very unjust to the people of the Maritime Provinces in some of its most important features. I believe to force it upon us without important modifications would frustrate the end it is intended to promote, the permanence of British institutions on this Continent." The same gentleman at a public meeting in the city of Halifax said,—"The people of Nova Scotia will hesitate long before they yield up their present enviable position, their political freedom and material wealth, for the uncertain and dubious advantages to fallow from a union with a country bankrupt in resources and torn asunder and distracted by political convulsions." If the advocates of Confederation have faith in the soundness of their scheme let them submit it to the only tribunal competent to pass a judgment upon it, "the people at the polls."

Mr. McDonell, in the House of Assembly during the last Session, when it was proposed to authorize the appointment of the present delegation, said,—"I felt happy, Sir, to observe the position taken by the honourable leader of the Government, and I trust that this position will be approved of and endorsed by his honourable colleagues, and by those associated with him at the Quebec Conference. The honourable gentleman has at length shown a disposition to abandon that pet scheme of union, which for such a length of time he and his friends appeared determined to fasten upon the people, a scheme in my opinion as obnoxious and untasteful to the country as it would prove injurious to its best interests."

FROM LORD DURHAM'S REPORT:—"But the state of the lower provinces, though it justifies the proposal of our union, would not, I think, render it gracious or even just on the part of parliament to carry it into effect without referring it for the ample deliberation and consent of the people of these colonies."

Hon. Mr. Brown, in the Canadian Assembly, said,—"If we base this structure, as it ought to be based, on the expressed will of the people themselves, then I think we will be offering to those who

come after us as well as to ourselves, a heritage that every man should be proud of. If there were any doubt about public feeling there might be propriety in going to the polls. I am not opposing the honorable gentleman's resolution on constitutional grounds. I am not denying the rights of the people. If I had any doubt whatever about what would be the verdict of the people, but it is simply because I am satisfied there would be a sweeping verdict in favour of the measure that I think it unnecessary to take it to the country."

DRAFT OF A BILL.

Be it enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. That whenever the people of any two or more of the Provinces of British North America shall desire to form a legislative or federal union of their respective Provinces for intercolonial purposes, it shall be lawful for their several Parliaments to pass Acts for that purpose, which, upon receiving the Royal assent, shall have the force of law; but no such Acts shall pass in any House of Assembly except in such as shall be returned at a general election, to be held next after drafts of said Act shall be laid before each branch of said Parliaments respectively in the Provinces intended to be united. And no such Act shall pass unless by the votes of two-thirds of the members of each House of Parliament in favour thereof.

2. After the formation of any such union, and after a general Parliament shall be held for the United Provinces, it shall be lawful for the said Parliament, by an Act thereof, to alter, modify, or amend the constitution which may be adopted for the United Provinces, provided such Act be passed by majorities of at least two-thirds of the members of each branch of said General Parliament; but no such Act shall pass in any House of Assembly except in such as shall be returned at a general election to be held next after notice of the intended alteration, modification, or amendment shall have been given in both branches of said Parliament in Session.

3. Nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to lessen or impair the authority of the Crown and the power of the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in the premises.

No. 2.

NOVA SCOTIA v. CONFEDERATION.

THREE years ago the Maritime Provinces of British America were tranquil, prosperous, and content, having no disputes with each other, with the Mother Country, or with foreign States. In 1864 certain gentlemen were invited to Canada to consider the policy of uniting the Provinces under one Government, and what is known as the "Quebec Scheme" resulted from their labours. Her Majesty's Ministers, assuming that the people whose interests were to be affected by this measure were prepared to accept it, gave it their sanction, and for a time its real bearing and the sentiments of the Colonists were in England but little understood. When presented to the Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island, it was found impossible to carry it in either. The advocates of this measure are now coming to England with this avowed object—to prepare a new Scheme, to be embodied in a Bill, and submitted to the Imperial Parliament, before it has been published in the Provinces, or considered by any of the Legislatures or Constituencies whose constitutions, rights, and revenues are to be affected. That any Government in England would lend itself to the accomplishment of such a design, or thus deal with franchises and great interests of intelligent communities, the people of Nova Scotia do not believe. In many of the oldest and most populous counties addresses, which are printed below, have been adopted, and petitions to the Imperial Parliament, praying its protection from any attempt at hasty or unfair legislation, are being extensively signed all over the Province. Even if a Bill were introduced at this late period of the Session, there is no time to deal with a subject of such magnitude and importance, involving the future of a half continent, the honour of the Crown, and the naval and military defence of the empire; but it is well that the people of England should hear both sides, and be in no haste to force new constitutions upon Provinces which have worked their old ones successfully, and may not like one got up in London much better than they did that prepared at Quebec.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of the County of Hants.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the County of Hants forms a central portion of the Province of Nova Scotia, and that its people are chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits, mining, shipbuilding, and navigation:

That it contains seven regiments of enrolled militiamen, and sends to sea 54,000 tons of shipping, bearing the flag of England:

That the people of this County, in common with their fellow-countrymen, have, since its first foundation, discharged all the duties of loyal British subjects; they have sent representatives to the Provincial Parliament since 1758, and for a quarter of a century have enjoyed self-government in as full and ample a manner as other British subjects in the most favoured parts of the Empire.

That the people of Hants, living in peace and prosperity, ready at all times to maintain their allegiance and defend their country, have been justly alarmed by attempts at revolutionary change, to which they have never given their consent, and for which they see no necessity.

A scheme of Confederation was hastily prepared at Quebec, in 1864, by Delegates who had no authority from the Legislature or people of Nova Scotia, to consent to a political union with Canada.

That scheme, unfair and distasteful to the Maritime Provinces, after convulsing them all for eighteen months, has been rejected by two, put aside by a third, and was so unfavourably received in this Province, that its promoters never ventured formally to submit it to the Legislature or to the people at the polls.

It is now proposed to entrust to a committee the preparation of a measure, to be embodied in a Bill and submitted to the Imperial Parliament, without affording to the people, whose rights, revenues, and future prosperity it may affect, any opportunity to protect themselves in the ordinary modes known to the Constitution, and practised by the people of all free states.

The prayer of the people of Hants, therefore, is that no change in the institutions of this country may be made until it has been submitted to the test of public opinion, and that your Majesty will sacredly guard the rights which we have loyally exercised and enjoyed so long, until by all the forms sanctioned by the usage of the Mother-Country, they have been deliberately resigned.

(Signed) EDWARD McLATCHY,
Chairman.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of the County of Kings.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the County of Kings is one of the oldest, most improved, and flourishing Counties of this Province, its population being engaged in agricultural pursuits, ship-building, commerce, and navigation:

That it contains six regiments of enrolled militia, and sends to sea 20,000 tons of shipping, bearing the flag of England:

That the people of this County have enjoyed the privilege of sending members to the Provincial Parliament for more than a century, and in common with their fellow countrymen, have discharged all the duties of loyal British subjects, and for more than twenty years have enjoyed the inestimable blessings of self-government, raising, controlling, and dispensing their own revenues, and directing the administration of their own affairs:

That the people of Kings County desire still to enjoy these great advantages, and to transmit them unimpaired to their children:

That they highly prize their connexion with the Parent State, under whose mild rule they have lived and prospered, and whose flag they are ready to defend, but they do not desire to be transferred to the dominion of a sister Province with which they have no connexion—almost no trade, and which being frozen up for five months of the year, and possessing no navy or troops to spare, is incapable of forming a new nationality or protecting the seaboard of Nova Scotia:

That the people have viewed with just alarm the attempts which have been made by reckless persons to effect revolutionary changes, which they have not ventured to submit to the deliberate judgment of the population whose welfare in all time to come they would so deeply compromise. The Scheme of Confederation, arranged at Quebec in 1864, was not less distasteful to the people of Kings than is the proposition to entrust power to a committee to prepare another to be embodied in an Act of Parliament and sanctioned by the Crown without being submitted to the people at the polls.

The prayer of the people of Kings, therefore, is that no change in the institutions of this country may be made until it has been submitted to the test of public opinion, and that your Majesty will sacredly guard the rights which we have loyally exercised and enjoyed so long, until by all the forms sanctioned by the usage of the mother-country they have been deliberately resigned.

(Signed) CHARLES DICKEY,
Chairman.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of the County of Annapolis.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT Annapolis is the oldest English settlement in the Province of Nova Scotia, containing 17,000 inhabitants, four regiments of militia, and a large amount of tonnage bearing the flag of England:

That the people of this County have discharged all the duties of loyal British subjects, have sent members to the Provincial Parliament for more than a century, and under your Majesty's beneficent rule are prosperous and content:

That they view with great distrust attempts recently made to annex them to the Province of Canada, with which they have no natural connexion and very little trade: That a Scheme of Confederation arranged at Quebec in 1864, without the consent of the constituencies, who have never been consulted, would be an invasion of their rights, and would, if sanctioned by your Majesty's Government, create wide-spread dissatisfaction in this loyal and happy Province.

The prayer of the people of Annapolis, therefore, is that no change in the institutions of this country may be made until it has been submitted to the test of public opinion, and that your Majesty will sacredly guard the rights which we have loyally exercised and enjoyed so long, until by all the forms sanctioned by the usage of the mother-country they have been deliberately resigned.

(Signed) DAVID LANDERS,
Chairman.

LETTER RESPECTING THE PROPOSED UNION

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of the County of Digby :

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the County of Digby contains 16,000 inhabitants, five regiments of enrolled militia, and about 19,000 tons of shipping, bearing the flag of England :

THAT this County, formerly part of the County of Annapolis, has long sent representatives to the General Assembly, and its people have discharged all the duties of loyal British subjects, and under your Majesty's benign rule are prosperous and content :

THAT they view with great distrust attempts recently made to annex them to the Province of Canada, with which they have no natural connexion and very little trade :

THAT a scheme of Confederation arranged at Quebec in 1864, without the consent of the constituencies, who have never been consulted, would be a violation of their rights, and would, if sanctioned by your Majesty's Government, create wide-spread dissatisfaction in this loyal and happy Province :

THAT while that portion of this County which borders on the sea is thickly inhabited and rapidly increasing in population and wealth, there are still considerable districts, but lately reclaimed from the primeval forest, sparsely settled by immigrants from Great Britain and Ireland, encountering all the difficulties and privations incident to the early settlement of a rugged though promising country, and large grants from the revenues of the Province have yearly to be made to open up roads and construct bridges, and otherwise aid in the development and facilitate the settlement of such sections of the Province; and your petitioners regard with dismay the prospect of the transfer of the control of those revenues to a Government by which they would necessarily all be expended for widely different purposes, a deprivation which such portions of this County may afford hereafter, but certainly not for many years to come :

THAT, while your petitioners are ready cheerfully to submit to any burthens that it may be deemed necessary to impose on them for the defence of their country and their flag, and to defend that flag and the honour of the Empire, wherever their aid can be available by sea or land, they are not disposed to adopt as a means of their ensuring their more efficient defence a union with a Province, which, in 1862, refused to sanction a measure involving an increased outlay for the better and more perfect organization of their militia, although that measure was strongly urged upon that Province by the "just authority" of your Majesty's Government.

The prayer of the people of Digby, therefore, is that no change in the institutions of this country may be made until it has been submitted to the test of public opinion, and that your Majesty will sacredly guard the rights which we have loyally exercised and enjoyed so long.

(Signed)

JOHN G. M'NEILL,
Chairman.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of Yarmouth.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the County of Yarmouth contains about 16,000 inhabitants, five regiments of militia, and owns 100,000 tons of shipping, bearing the flag of England :

THAT the people of this County have discharged all the duties of loyal British subjects, have sent members to the Provincial Parliament for a century, and under your Majesty's beneficent rule are prosperous and content :

THAT they view with great distrust attempts recently made to annex them to the Province of Canada, with which they have no natural connexion, and very little trade :

THAT a scheme of Confederation arranged at Quebec in 1864, without the consent of the Constituencies of the Province, who have never either before or since that time been consulted on the subject, would be an invasion of their rights, and would, if sanctioned by your Majesty's Government, create wide-spread dissatisfaction in this loyal and happy Province :

THAT since the said Quebec Scheme was made public, a township election has taken place in this County, when both the opposing candidates pledged themselves strongly against any scheme of Confederation with Canada.

The prayer of the people of Yarmouth, therefore, is, that no change in the institutions of this country may be made until it shall have been submitted to the people at the polls, and that your Majesty will sacredly guard the rights which we have so long loyally exercised and enjoyed.

(Signed)

NATHAN MOSES,
Chairman.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the People of the County of Shelburne, in the Province of Nova Scotia :

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the County of Shelburne contains a population of 12,000, principally engaged in the fisheries and in shipbuilding,—is capable of sending into the field four regiments of enrolled militia, and owns about 20,000 tons of shipping, bearing your Majesty's flag :

THAT its people are the descendants of an ancestry whose veneration for the British throne and attachment to monarchical institutions impelled them, in 1783, to forsake lands and possessions in the revolted colonies, and seek an asylum on the then inhospitable shores of this Province :

THAT since the first settlement of the County in 1783 its people have sent representatives to the Provincial Parliament, and for the last quarter of a century have enjoyed the privileges of self-government in as ample a degree as their brethren in the British Islands :

That their instinct and traditions lead them to deprecate revolutionary changes, the end of which no man can foresee, but which, once hazarded, there is too much reason to fear will eventuate in a separation of these Provinces from the parent state, and their absorption into the already unwieldy republic of the United States:

That they have seen, with alarm and indignation, a scheme of Confederation, hastily prepared at Quebec in 1864, introduced into our Legislature during its late Session, without previous notice in the opening speech, and forced through that body with unbecoming and unnecessary haste, and in a manner calculated to throw the gravest suspicions upon the influences employed to secure its passage:

That whilst your Majesty's petitioners freely admit the right of their representatives in Provincial Parliament to legislate for them within reasonable limits, they cannot admit the right of such representatives to effect sudden changes amounting to an entire subversion of the Constitution, without the deliberate sanction of the people expressed at the polls.

The prayer of the people of Shelburne, therefore, is, that the assent of your Majesty will be withheld from any scheme affecting the Constitution of the Province—and more particularly from that known as the Quebec Scheme—until such measure has been fully subjected to the test of public opinion, and deliberately pronounced upon by the people at the polls.

(Signed) JOSHUA SNOW,
Chairman.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the People of the Southern District of Queen's County, in the Province of Nova Scotia:

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT Queen's County contains a population of 12,000, principally engaged in lumbering, fishing, and navigation,—can equip three regiments of enrolled militia, and owns about 17,000 tons of shipping bearing the flag of England:

That the County has sent representatives to the Provincial Parliament for upwards of a century, and its people, for more than twenty years, have enjoyed the blessings of civil and religious liberty, personal security, and temporal prosperity, under a system of responsible government which, modelled after that of England, leaves them nothing to desire but its undisturbed continuance:

That they have witnessed with apprehension and regret the efforts of a small party in this Province to unsettle a condition of things which has worked so satisfactorily, by sweeping away their free constitution, by subjecting this people, their revenues, resources, and independence, to the virtual denomination of another colony, and to the doubtful issue of an experiment known as the Quebec scheme of Confederation:

That even were the proposed union as likely to be beneficial as, in the judgment of your Majesty's petitioners, it is certain to be injurious to the best interests of the Maritime Provinces, the means employed to force it upon the country without an appeal to the people, and with a full knowledge of their intense dislike to the measure, ought to ensure its rejection at the hands of a Sovereign whose ambition is to live in the affections of her dutiful subjects.

The prayer of the people of Queen's County, therefore is, that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to withhold your royal assent from any measure affecting the relations of this Province to the sister colonies, until by means of a general election, the sentiments of the people of Nova Scotia, in reference to this most important subject, may be truly reflected in their Legislature.

(Signed) M. MORTIMER,
Chairman.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the Inhabitants of the Northern District of Queen's County:

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the inhabitants of this district live by the cultivation of the soil, and are content to share with your Majesty's subjects elsewhere the common blessings which their British citizenship includes.

In Nova Scotia, loyalty to the Sovereign, respect for the law, and devotion to the national flag, are universal sentiments. Its people prize highly the right of self-government, which they have long enjoyed, and are content with their participation in the organization and glory of the Empire.

Revolutionary changes in the framework of their Government, proposed by a convention which assembled at Quebec in 1864, met no favour from the people of Nova Scotia, who view with distrust and indignation the passage of a resolution giving power to a committee to change or break down the institutions of this Province, without the people having expressed any desire for such a measure, and without securing to them the constitutional right to accept or reject it at the polls.

There is no reason why Nova Scotia should be subject to the domination of Canada.

Your Majesty's subjects in this Province—proud, self-reliant, and happy, prepared to defend the just authority of the Crown, and bearing the national flag all over the world—would be broken in spirit and rendered discontented and restless if controlled by a Legislature in which they could never command a majority, and by a distant authority which they could rarely hope to influence.

The prayer of the people of North Queen's, therefore, is, that the institutions under which they have lived and prospered may be preserved, and that no radical changes may be sanctioned by the Imperial Government which have not been approved by the electors at the polls.

(Signed) STEPHEN SMITH,
Chairman

LETTER RESPECTING THE PROPOSED UNION

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty,—The Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the County of Lunenburg, in Your Majesty's Province of Nova Scotia:

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT this County was settled over a century ago, chiefly by natives of Germany, who with their descendants have been distinguished for unswerving loyalty to the British Crown and for sincere respect and esteem for Your Majesty's Royal House. And it is the most earnest desire of your petitioners to live under the protection of the British flag, and to maintain their allegiance as British subjects:

That this County has a population of over 20,000, and is rapidly increasing in wealth and prosperity; That its enrolled militia numbers eight regiments, with upwards of 4,000 first-class men; and that the vessels and men engaged in the prosecution of the fisheries number more than those of any other County in the Province:

That the County is represented in the Provincial Parliament by three members, and that an election held in December last to supply a vacancy caused by the decease of one member resulted in the return of a candidate, by a majority of over 680 votes, opposed to any union of the Provinces being passed upon by the Legislature, without action first had thereon by the people at the polls:

That the means which have been taken to secure a union of the Provinces without the electors being first consulted have excited in the minds of your petitioners great dissatisfaction and indignation, believing as they do that a question of such importance should be submitted for the decision of the people, as it will affect them and their descendants for all time.

We do most respectfully and earnestly pray that Your most Gracious Majesty will uphold for us those rights and privileges which, under the system of Responsible Government, granted to this Province, we have so long enjoyed in peace and prosperity, and that before any union of these Provinces be carried Your most Gracious Majesty will cause the question to be submitted for the decision of the electors of Nova Scotia; a privilege which, though hitherto denied them, has, in the short space of fourteen months, been twice granted to their fellow subjects in the adjoining Province of New Brunswick. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(Signed)

M. B. DESBRISAY,
Chairman.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

The Petition of the Inhabitants of Nova Scotia:

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT the Province of Nova Scotia is one of the oldest Colonies of Great Britain, and one of the nearest to the Mother Country:

That when the American Revolution separated thirteen English Colonies from the Crown, Nova Scotia stood true to her allegiance, and furnished a home for the loyalists who sacrificed their property and their prospects in the American States for the sake of British connexion:

That ever since, during the political agitations which have disturbed this Continent—especially during the war of 1812 and the Canadian rebellions of 1837–38, Nova Scotia has been steadfast in her loyalty; and that when the neighbouring Province of New Brunswick was menaced from the American side in 1859 the Legislature of Nova Scotia unanimously placed the whole revenues and resources of the country at the disposal of the Lieutenant Governor for the defence of the British flag upon the frontier:

That this people have discharged, in other respects, the duties of British subjects to the satisfaction of the Crown. They have sent representatives to the Provincial Parliament since 1758; for a quarter of a century have enjoyed responsible government in as full and ample a measure as have their fellow subjects in the most favoured parts of the Empire; and have preserved from degeneracy and abuse their constitutional rights and free institutions:

That the people of this Province, from their maritime position, have developed the pursuits of ship building, navigation, commerce, and fishing into prosperous activity. Their agricultural resources are rich and varied, whilst the vast mineral wealth which underlies the whole area of the country is a special guarantee of its future prosperity under favourable political conditions. The gold mines of Nova Scotia, without rising to the character of dazzling lotteries to attract a promiscuous or disorderly population from abroad, have proved steadily remunerative as a regular department of native industry, and a profitable investment for foreign capital. The great iron mines already discovered give earnest, in connexion with its coal fields, of manufacturing capabilities not inferior to those of any country of similar extent. It has the thickest coal seams in the world, and their area is extensive, affording fair ground for the presumption that, for the purposes of peace or war, Nova Scotia's continued connexion with Great Britain would prove of mutual advantage. Possessed of these resources, the people desire closer relations with the Mother Country in order to be able to enjoy more largely the benefits, as well as share more fully the responsibilities, of the Empire; and already the Province has enrolled 60,000 efficient militia and volunteers to assist in the maintenance of British power on this Continent, and sends to sea 440,000 tons of shipping, built and owned within the Province, bearing the flag of England, and manned by more than 20,000 seamen.

That Nova Scotia has no controversies with the mother-country, the other Provinces, or with the population of the neighbouring United States; and highly prizes the privileges so long enjoyed of regulating her own tariffs, and conducting trade, but lightly burthened, with the British Islands and Colonies in all parts of the world and with foreign countries.

That the people of Nova Scotia are prepared to entertain any propositions by which (preserving to them the institutions they now have and the privileges they enjoy) greater facilities for commercial and

social intercourse with other States and Provinces may be secured : and they are willing, whenever their own coast and harbours are safe, to aid Her Majesty's forces to preserve from aggression the Provinces in the rear.

But they view with profound distrust and apprehension schemes, recently propounded, by which it is proposed to transfer to the people of Canada the control of the Government, Legislation, and Revenues of this loyal and happy Province, and they venture respectfully to crave from your Honourable House justice and protection :

That the Province of Canada lies as far from Nova Scotia as Austria does from England, and there exists no reason why a people who live at such a distance, with whom we have but little commerce, who have invested no capital in our country, who are unable to protect it, and are themselves shut off from ocean navigation by frost for five months of the year, should control our Legislation and Government :

That in 1864 the Government of Nova Scotia, without any authority from the Legislature, and without any evidence of the consent of the people, sent delegates to Canada to arrange in secret conference at Quebec a political union between the various Provinces. That these delegates concealed the result of their conference from the people until it became incidentally made public in another Province, and that, to this hour, they have never unfolded portions of the scheme having the most essential relation to the peculiar interests and local government of Nova Scotia subsequent to Confederation.

That the scheme, when at last made public, was received with great dissatisfaction in Nova Scotia ; that the opposition to it has been constantly on the increase, and has been intensified by the conduct of the Government and the delegates, who now propose to call in the aid of your Honourable House to assist them to overthrow, by an arbitrary exercise of power, free institutions enjoyed for a century and never abused :

That the objections of the people to the proposed Confederation scheme affect not merely minor local details, but the radical principles of the plan. The people cannot recognize the necessity for change in their present tranquil, prosperous, and free condition. They cannot believe that the proposed Confederation with the distant Colony (Canada) will prove of any practical benefit, either for defence or trade ; while, from the past history of that country, its sectional troubles, its eccentric political management and financial embarrassments, they have great reason to fear that Confederation would be to them a most disastrous change, retarding their progress, and rendering their prolonged connexion with the Crown precarious if not impossible. Forming, as she does now, a portion of the Empire, Nova Scotia is already confederated with fifty other States and Provinces, enjoys free trade with two hundred and fifty millions of people living under one flag and owning the authority of one Sovereign. She has no desire to part with her self control, or to narrow her commercial privileges, by placing herself under the dominion of a Sister Colony, with an exposed frontier, frostbound for a third of the year, and with no navy to defend the Maritime Provinces when her ports are open.

The scheme of government framed at Quebec is unlike any other that history shows to have been successful. It secures neither the consolidation, dignity, and independent power of monarchy, nor the checks and guards which ensure to the smaller States self-government and controlling influence over the Federal authorities in the neighbouring Republic. By adopting the federal principle, sectionalism in the five Provinces is perpetuated ; by the timid and imperfect mode in which that principle is applied the people, whose minds have been unsettled by this crude experiment, may be driven to draw contrasts and nourish aspirations of which adventurous and powerful neighbours will not be slow to take advantage ; and the people of Nova Scotia have no desire to peril the integrity of the Empire, with the blessings they now enjoy, or to try new experiments, which may complicate foreign relations, and yet add no real strength to the Provinces it is proposed to combine.

The people object also to the financial arrangements, as especially burdensome and unfair to this Province. Having long enjoyed the control and benefited by the expenditure of their own revenues, they cannot approve a scheme that will wrest the greater part of these from their hands, to keep up costly and cumbrous federal machinery, and to meet the liabilities of Canada.

For many years the commercial policy of Nova Scotia has been essentially different from that of Canada. The latter country, partly from necessity arising out of financial embarrassments, and partly as an indirect premium on her own manufactures, has adopted a tariff varying from 20 to 30 per cent. on imported goods.

Almost surrounded, as Nova Scotia is, by the ocean, her people are favourably situated for enjoying free commercial intercourse with every section of the British Empire and with those foreign countries open to her commerce by the enlightened policy of the Parent State : of this privilege she has availed herself by imitating, as far as local circumstances would permit, the liberal and free trade policy of the Mother Country—ten per cent. being the ad valorem duty collected under the Nova Scotia tariff on goods imported into the Province. The proposed scheme of union will give Canada, by her large preponderance in the Legislature, the power to shape the tariff for the whole Confederacy according to her inland ideas and necessities, so as to levy the same onerous duties on British goods imported into Nova Scotia as are now exacted by Canada.

That since the Confederation scheme has been announced there have been special parliamentary elections in three out of the eighteen counties of this Province, and in all three it has been condemned at the polls.

That in 1865 the scheme was condemned at nearly every public meeting held by the delegates to discuss it, and numerous petitions against its adoption were presented to the Provincial Parliament, and only one in its favour, until the leader of the Government declared the measure to be "impracticable."

That at the opening of the late session no reference to Confederation was made in the speech of the Lieutenant Governor, and down to a late period the people of Nova Scotia were led to believe that the scheme had been abandoned. A resolution was introduced towards the close of the session, clothing the Government with power to appoint delegates, who, in connexion with delegates from the other Provinces, are to frame a scheme of government ; to which it is proposed to ask the sanction of your Honourable House before it has been submitted to the Legislature that it may annihilate, or to the people whose legal and constitutional rights and powers it may transfer or circumscribe.

The undersigned, menaced by a measure that may be revolutionary, repose implicit confidence in the protection of the Imperial Parliament. They deny the authority of their own Legislature, invested with limited powers for a definite term, to deprive them of rights earned by their ancestors by the most painful sacrifices, wisely exercised and never abused for more than a century, and which they had no legitimate authority to alienate or break down. They believe that any scheme of government, framed by a committee of delegates and forced upon the Provinces without their revision or approval, would generate wide spread dissatisfaction among a loyal and contented people, who will not fail to reflect that no change can be made in the constitution of any of the neighbouring States which has not first been approved by the electors; and that important measures, affecting imperial policy or institutions, are rarely attempted till they have been submitted for acceptance or rejection by the people whose interests they are to affect.

Your petitioners therefore pray that your Honourable House will be pleased to defer all action in favour of Confederation in the Imperial Parliament until the people of Nova Scotia shall have exercised and enjoyed their constitutional privilege to express their opinions at the polls, or that your Honourable House may be pleased to direct that a special committee shall inquire into all the features of the proposed scheme of Confederation, as it is likely to affect the several Provinces in their relations to each other and to the mother-country; or that the people of Nova Scotia be permitted to appear by counsel at the bar of your Honourable House to defend their interests and institutions. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

No. 3.

NEWFOUNDLAND *v.* CONFEDERATION.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

The Petition of the undersigned Merchants, Traders, Fishermen, and other Inhabitants of Newfoundland, MOST HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT this Colony has for many years enjoyed the blessings and privileges of self-government and local legislation, the imposition and appropriation of duties and taxes, and the general management of its local affairs:

That the sentiments of all classes of its people have been, and still are, of the most loyal and devoted character: that its necessities or demands for protection from the foreign enemy or from internal disturbance have never been a heavy burden or a serious cost to the Imperial Exchequer; while from the fact of its staple products being confined to fish and oil, and the country having limited agricultural and no manufacturing resources, its chief import trade is prosecuted, and its most intimate commercial relations are held with Great Britain. Newfoundland, while holding a prominent and formidable position upon the Atlantic, as the point nearest to England, is practically more remote from the principal ports of the Canadas than from Britain itself, and has never had any political, and only minor commercial, connexion with the former—a connexion which is entirely cut off by sea for nearly six months of the year, during which time there can be no communication with Canada, except through the territories of a foreign power—the United States of America. The inhabitants of this Colony would desire to see this island always retained separately by Britain, as its ocean fortress and military outpost in this part of the world, whatever might be the future destiny of the Colonies on the mainland. But let the value attached to her position in an Imperial view be what it may, the Colony has, from its distinct trade and its different characteristics, no community of interests with Upper or Lower Canada, and little with the other Maritime Provinces.

The people regard, therefore, with grave apprehension and alarm any project which has for its object the union of the Island of Newfoundland with the other British North American dependencies of the Crown. Some reasons which might influence them to receive it with favour are just those which make it undesirable for Newfoundland. The motives which in their case have actuated the policy of Great Britain for the promotion of the scheme of Confederation are entirely wanting in ours. We are no cause of offence, we are not in the path of possible aggression or in the way of attack, unless and until the national cause of Great Britain involves us in a common fate. We are a comparatively small burthen on the Home Government; and, in the present condition of affairs, obtain those supplies from Britain which we should, under the proposed Union, have in a great measure to abandon for the inferior manufactures of colonies with which we have little trade. Under these circumstances, it has been proposed to include this Colony in a Confederation on the basis of the Quebec Convention of 1864, and by this measure to deprive her of those civil, constitutional, and territorial rights which she has so long held and so dearly prized; and for a loss so great there is no offer of a substantial return.

Our taxation, already burdensome, will be assimilated to the much higher Canadian tariff.

Our revenues will go to the central exchequer, and in return we shall receive a sum far below our present income without any corresponding advantages.

No matter how a rapidly growing population, the development of our resources, or our future necessities may call for augmented supplies, not to speak of the constantly increasing demands for public improvements; no matter how large at any time our contribution to the Federal finances may be, our receipts from it are proposed to be permanently limited to 112,000*l.* per annum.

The proposed Central Government will also possess the dangerous power to levy duties upon the exports of a Colony, whose only wealth lies in them, and which, from its peculiar circumstances, will be utterly without the means of local taxation wherewith to promote public improvement or to relieve its people from a pauperism which, to some extent, is necessarily chronic and frequently widespread and disastrous.

The chief exports of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are expressly exempt from the power of Federal taxation.

The people of Newfoundland have no interest and can derive no benefit whatever from the great public works of Canada, existing or projected. There is no provision even made in the Quebec Con-

vention for a connexion by lines of steamers between the Colony and the other Provinces on the one hand, and Great Britain on the other: while for the North-western territory guarantees for complete territorial connexion are contained.

These are amongst the objections which apply to the Quebec Convention, even if the project of union could on any basis be made applicable and beneficial to this Colony, its trade, and people.

But the peculiar position and circumstances arising from the nature of its trade, its resources and its geography are such that the Maritime Provinces in their original project of union never contemplated the introduction of Newfoundland. Even when the Canadas proposed to unite with them, this Colony was not included until after the convocation of delegates at Quebec in the autumn of 1864, when a request was made to our local Executive to send non-official delegates to be present at the proceedings.

These delegates were not clothed with any active authority.

The express terms of the convention show that Newfoundland was only provisionally referred to.

The subject had never been a matter of popular inquiry or political consideration in this Colony up to that time. Public alarm has been excited by the result of late elections in the Continental Colonies, and by the fact that delegates from them are, it is said, to proceed to Britain to negotiate a scheme of union.

It is with the view to convey to your Honourable House the aversion of this people to be considered at this time in any overtures or negotiations whatever that may be so made or had, that your petitioners on their behalf now approach your Honourable House.

If circumstances should hereafter arise to make it less objectionable than it now is for this Colony to be considered in any project of union with the rest of British North America, our people will, petitioners feel sure, lend a ready and loyal ear to the Imperial counsels.

In the meantime your petitioners believe the objections to be insuperable; but if they be wrong, the voice of all the people of the Colony may be taken at an early and convenient time.

These people are, at this time, for the most part scattered and engaged in the avocation of the fishery. And it is for this reason that at this moment of alarm these petitioners presume to give expression to an opinion, and to prefer a prayer which they believe to coincide with the wishes and feelings of the great majority of the people.

In this view they are upheld by the action of the Legislature in its late session when, in reply to the Governor's speech at the opening of the session, it was obliged to give some response to the reference made by him to the subject of Confederation. The reply of the Assembly was as follows:—

“On the important subject of Confederation, in recognizing the solicitude of Her Majesty's Government for the welfare of this Colony, we concur in the view of your Excellency that the abstract advantages of union are so obvious as to be almost universally acknowledged, *whilst with regard to this Colony and on the details of so grave a measure* it is natural that much diversity of opinion should prevail. This is a matter which shall engage our serious attention.”

By this resolution the House of Assembly, being the representatives of the people, clearly excepted Newfoundland from the application of the principle of Confederation, and also objected to the measure in detail. The expression of opinion which accompanied and followed that passage in the Address fully confirms this view, and, for example, the language of the Solicitor-General, who proposed this paragraph, was:—

“The only important words added to the original clause were, ‘with regard to this Colony and —.’ This alteration would show that there is not only a diversity of opinion with regard to the detail, but also to the very principle itself. He (Hon. S.-G.) desired to be understood that he not only opposed the Quebec Resolutions, but was altogether opposed to the principle of Confederation as far as this Colony was concerned.”

The Attorney-General and Premier said:—“He endorsed the statement of the Honourable Solicitor-General with regard to the non-committal character of his amendment one way or another, and the Government had no desire or intention to adopt any course which would not be generally acceptable.”

“So far as he (Hon. A.-Gen.) was concerned, no measure should be attempted to force it on them in opposition to their wishes, to be gathered from the constitutional channels.”

And the Premier again subsequently expressed himself, thus:—“The Members of the Executive admitted distinctly, when the amendment was agreed to, that they did not regard it as affirming or denying the principle of Confederation.”

It was in this way and upon these terms and express understanding that the Address of the Assembly on this point was passed. Even the Imperial body, the Legislative Council, in its Address to the same speech, reserved the definite determination for the Legislature at a future time.

Your petitioners' loyal confidence in the assurance of Her Majesty's ministers, contained in despatches and openly expressed in Parliament, as well as the reliance of this people upon the just and gracious consideration of the promises of the Parliament of Great Britain, as well as their conviction that no infraction of the settled constitutional rights and political freedom of any British community will be permitted by the British Parliament against the consent of the Colonists, induce your petitioners thus boldly to adopt a course which, while it may be unnecessary, is suggested and impelled by the contemplation of the powerful counter-influences brought to bear upon a question of such solemn and serious import to Her Majesty's subjects, and by a desire to prevent or remove any possible misapprehension of the present sentiments of the people of Newfoundland, or of the position in which this Colony stands in regard to the Confederation project.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray your Honourable House that no negotiations may be had, and that no measure or project may be entertained in Parliament, contemplating the present comprehension of this Colony in any scheme of union with the other Provinces, until this question, involving as it does the vital interests and future fate of this dependency of the Crown, shall have been definitely submitted to the people of Newfoundland at a general election of representatives to their House of Assembly. And as in duty bound they will ever pray.

St. John's, Newfoundland, July 4th, A.D. 1866.

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