

be altered, and the whole design undergo the revision of an architect in whom I have confidence.

Sir, the hostility I have all along evinced to the Quebec scheme of Confederation has frequently been attributed to a desire to defeat the government, and thus promote my own political prospects. I trust that the course I have this day taken will be a sufficient answer to this charge. If such were my desire my end would be most certainly attained, in the present wide-spread hostility to that scheme, by maintaining the position I have occupied for the last eighteen months, without committing myself to any proposal for the solution of our difficulties. But as an avowed Unionist, such a course would be indefensible, and I am not willing to pursue any course I cannot defend. Nor do I seek any temporary triumph over my political opponents at the expense of the highest interests of my country. If the government are animated by sentiments of moderation, justice and good policy, they shall have my humble aid in the great work in which they are engaged. I hope we may find a common ground of co-operation in our efforts to improve our present condition of isolation and obscurity, and elevate Nova Scotia to the position it surely intended her to occupy. But, sir, do not let me be supposed to underrate the present position of this Province. Far from it. Even as she is, I am proud of my country, and grateful for the happy home she affords her sons. Yet proud, sir, as I am of the little sea-girt province I call my native land; proud as I am of her free institutions—her moral status—her material wealth; proud as I am of the name of Nova Scotian—a name which the genius and valour of my countrymen have inscribed high on the scroll of fame; proud, I say as I am, and may well be permitted to be of these things, I have never ceased to entertain the hope, expressed in this legislature in 1864, that the day was not far distant, when you, sir, and I, and those who listen to me—in common with the inhabitants of these noble Provinces, united under one government, might stand before the world in the prouder national character of British Americans.

HON. PROVINCIAL SECRETARY replied:—I have listened with much gratification to the address which has just been delivered to this House by the hon. member for Richmond, and I confess that I am not surprised that, distasteful as the Quebec scheme of Union has been to many persons in this country, in the existing condition of public affairs in British North America, the attention of the strongest opponents of that scheme should be directed to the great question of what solution may be found for the difficulties of the position in which we are placed. Having taken a part in maturing that great measure—having, on former occasions, felt it my duty to vindicate the scheme that was propounded for the consideration of British North America, I cannot be supposed to enter into the feelings of the hon. member for Richmond in his denunciation of that scheme. I believed then, and I believe now, that the plan of Intercolonial Union that was propounded by the Conference at Quebec and which has obtained so marked a degree of favour and approval from Her Majesty's Government, did afford the people of British North America the most ample guarantee for the rights and privileges of all sections. But I am not insensible to the fact that many objections have been raised against that scheme, and that many gentlemen who have taken a most prominent part in opposing various features of the measure, have in the Press, as the hon. member has in his place in Parliament, declared themselves in favour of a Union of British North America, that would be acceptable to the people of this country. I am not, standing in the peculiar position I do, able, how-

ever, to give a direct and unequivocal statement of the views of the government or of the promoters of the Quebec scheme. The House is well aware that this question has from the first been submitted to the people as one in which the government divided the responsibility with gentlemen who were politically opposed to them. Occupying this position the government would have been not only wanting in courtesy to the gentlemen who had supported them, but would have failed in their duty in respect to a great public question, if they had ever treated it in a party aspect.—In dealing with this question the government have always consulted the wishes and inclinations, and carried with them, the co-operation of the gentlemen who are politically opposed to them. Under these circumstances it would be impossible for me to state the views of the government, except on consultation with those who have acted with us, and are parties to the scheme of Union. But as far as I may state without consultation, I believe that all the gentlemen who have been engaged in maturing the Quebec scheme have had no other desire than to meet the wishes and consult the best interests of their countrymen. They have always looked upon this question as too solemn in its character to allow it for a single moment to be influenced by any considerations except the welfare of the country. I am not at all surprised at the statements made by the hon. member.—The last twelve months have been pregnant with circumstances that must give an importance and an urgency to this question of Colonial Union such as it has never obtained before. In view of the altered condition of things I am not at all surprised that the most strenuous opponents of the Quebec scheme are ready to co-operate on some common ground on which they and the promoters of that scheme will be prepared, at any sacrifice that they can make consistently with the great objects to be obtained, to deal with this question with the gravity that its importance demands, and arrive at a consummation that will be acceptable to the great body of the people.

MR. ANNAND—After the very remarkable address delivered by the hon. member for Richmond, I think it right at once to declare openly that the question asked by the hon. gentleman has taken this side of the House by surprise. When he comes to us and propounds a delegation to the Colonial office—invites the interposition of the Colonial Government to settle a question involving the rights and liberties of this people—asks the Home Government to arrange the question without reference to the people, I look at this hon. member with surprise, and recall the sentiments that he uttered on former occasions. I feel strongly on this subject. It is an attempt to barter away, to sell the rights and liberties of the people. I do not know the influences that are at work, but I can imagine them. I never expected to live to see the time when, on the floors of this Parliament, a gentleman could arise and ask that our condition should be decided—where? not in your own Parliament, but by gentlemen sent across the water with *carte blanche* to settle the whole matter. The hon. member says he is in favor of the abstract principle of Union. I may or may not be in favor of it, but I cannot be a party to send the question for a