

and their products of grain, and saw that in the event of the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, the products of that vast, boundless and rich territory would not be allowed to find their way to the seaboard through a hostile country. She saw that the Americans, from necessity, would have to put all sorts of embargoes on goods; that on account of their vast debt that it would become absolutely necessary to impose very heavy taxes, almost amounting to prohibition; that they would be driven by necessity to that course, and finding their Canadian neighbors compelled to send their products through their territory, they would be subjected to very heavy imports. Therefore, in view of the commercial interests of the Canadas, it would become absolutely necessary to have the Provinces confederated, and that would lead to the building of an Inter-colonial Railway. It appeared from the delays and difficulties attending the action of three separate Legislatures to have been found almost impracticable to build that railway out of union. It was absolutely necessary for the prosperity of the country that it should be built. It had become an absolute necessity to have means for the constant transport for the ever increasing products of the Canadas. At the merchant's wharves at Toronto, Montreal and Quebec, immense stores of grain and flour were piled up, and had to remain there during the winter months, subject to deterioration and loss, for want of speedy and commodious transport to the seaboard. The absolute necessity of an Inter-colonial Railway, as thus shown, might be one of the reasons why the British Government desired that the Provinces should be united in one compact.

Mr. Gilbert then proceeded to speak of the policy of the Government on the question of Union, and to contrast their present position with that they held last winter. He then quoted from the Speech of last winter the following paragraph, and the reply thereto:

"At the request of the Governor General of Canada, and with the approbation of the Queen, I also appointed delegates to a Conference of Representatives of the British North American Colonies, held in Quebec in the month of October last, with a view of arranging the terms of a Federal Union of British North America. The Resolutions agreed to by this Conference appeared to me so important in their character, and their adoption fraught with consequences so materially affecting the future condition and well-being of British America, that in order to enable the people of New Brunswick to give expression to their wishes on the subject, I determined to dissolve the then existing House of Assembly. I now submit these Resolutions to your judgment."

"We thank your Excellency for the assurance that the correspondence between the Imperial Government and your Excellency, relating to this subject, will be laid before us."

He considered that there was no resemblance in either speech or answer of last year to the speech and reply of this session. He asked hon. members to look at the present speech:

"I have received Her Majesty's com-

mands to communicate to you a Correspondence on the affairs of British North America, which has taken place between Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Governor General for Canada; and I am further directed to express to you the strong and deliberate opinion of Her Majesty's Government, that it is an object much to be desired, that all the British North American Colonies should agree to unite in one Government. These papers will immediately be laid before you."

The Government, by this paragraph in the Speech endorsed the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The Government, when they therein said, that Union was the policy of the British Government, must expect that the House would give an affirmative answer. There was no doubt about that. But that Union was in reality the policy now of the Government, (though some might think from the way it was foreshadowed in the Speech, that that policy was very ambiguous,) there seemed to him no doubt. He would call the attention of the House to the paragraph in the reply to the Speech:

"11. The Correspondence which has taken place between Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Governor General of Canada on the affairs of British North America, when laid before us will receive due attention, and the opinion expressed by Her Majesty's Government will command that respect and attention which is due to suggestions emanating from so high a source; but in any scheme for a Union of the British North American Colonies which may be proposed, it is, in the opinion of this House, absolutely essential that full protection should be afforded to the rights and interests of the people of this Province; and no measure which fails to obtain these objects, should be adopted."

That plainly, he conceived, showed that Union was the policy of the Government. It was thus clearly seen that they had justified their former position; whereas last year they were opposed; they were this year committed, to the policy of Union. Then, since Union was their policy, how were the Government going to move in the matter? He had been informed that the Government would not submit any scheme; the House could not be called upon to vote upon any of the details, (they knew they could not get men to agree in one single point, or carry a scheme in detail,) but they would only be asked to affirm the general principle. All that the Mother Country was anxious about was to get the approval of the House to the general question of Union, that carried, the British Government would arrange the details in England with the advice of men from the Province who would be there to look after their interests. The House would see that it would not be necessary to vote upon the details of the Quebec Scheme or any other Scheme. Nothing would be necessary than to pass a resolution in favor of Union. That was all that was expected of New Brunswick. For his own part he would not be justified by the duty he owed to his constituents to vote for any such proposition.

Let hon. members read carefully the speeches of last year, and of the present, and note the difference between them,

and the result of the analysis would be to convince the House that the Government had entered into a solemn agreement that the present House would be committed to Union. His hon. colleague (Attorney General) said now, that he was willing to go for union and the cardinal point of representation by population, provided he could get in the upper branch of the Legislature some check to that principle. How could he reconcile his present position on union with that taken by him last year? How reconcile the Government policy of union with their celebrated Minute of Council, when they were as far distant from each other as the North was from the South? His hon. colleague talked about checks in the Upper House, to the principle of representation by population. But what check could there be unless it came from the people themselves? Would his hon. colleague say that fifteen representatives for New Brunswick in the Lower House in the general confederated Parliament, would not be sufficient if the proportion of representation for the Lower Provinces remained as it was under the scheme? Would any one say that it would be a sufficient safeguard to the Province if the Lower House sought to override its rights to have that increased representation in the Upper Branch? (Here the hon. member referred, in illustration of his argument that the Upper House could not check encroachment, by pointing to the British House of Lords—the most powerful and peculiarly privileged political body in the world—to show that even that august body was unable to check the popular principle. He gave as an instance the passage of the first Reform Bill in England, when, in the face of the resolution of the majority of the House of Lords to oppose it, they, with the Iron Duke at their head, had been forced to give way to the determination of the people that the Bill should pass.) If his hon. colleague said he would agree to representation by population, if neutralized by some check in the upper branch, he was, knowing, as he must, how powerless any check there would be to the popular principle, in fact as thorough-going and as strong a unionist as George Brown himself.

Leaving now the question of Confederation, and the uncertain, not to say ambiguous position of the Government in reference to it, he would come to another matter. In condemning it, he would give it as a very strong reason why he voted against them and for the amendment. He would ask the House to look at the correspondence of Mr. Wilmot with the Government on the subject of his resignation. After reading that correspondence, and considering calmly the remarks that gentleman had made in explanation of his position, he came to the conclusion that the Government was not a truthful Government. Mr. Wilmot said that His Excellency in Council, at the time the Minute of Council was drawn up, had referred to him as not opposed to the abstract principle of union. He had also given in evidence the authority of the present Judge Allen, that he had expressed strong sentiments in favor of union before he went to Canada. The Government had contravened these statements, and said that that honorable gentleman had got converted in Canada, and had more than hinted at influences brought to bear upon him, to induce a sudden change of opinion. But Mr.