

the statesmen who are called upon to discharge the functions of legislation in that country need no eulogium from me. It is with pride that I am able to state that having sat in the one House and stood in the other, I listened to the discussions on this great question, and not only the constitutional points which are at issue, but the true character of this union were clearly and ably propounded by the Parliament and statesmen of Great Britain. Having had both sides of this question before them they were able to render such a verdict as they never gave before on a great public measure. We are able to stand here and claim that the friends of Union were sustained by the friends of British institutions everywhere—that they have had the support and co-operation of the friends of the colonial empire in the Parliament of England; and what do you find to-day? In the "Morning Chronicle"—the organ of the gentlemen opposite—the debate on the question has been given in full, as I am happy to see, and what do you find in the Lords and Commons? You find this striking fact to which I wish to call the attention of gentlemen opposite who have said that this Union would weaken the connection with the Crown, that the statesmen of Great Britain, without regard to party, Liberal and Conservative, Whig and Tory, united in one common acclaim that the colonies would not only be rendered more prosperous, but that the ties that now bind them to the Empire would be strengthened. The very few members who could be induced by gentlemen opposite to reflect their sentiments did so on the ground that the colonies were a burthen, and that the sooner they were got rid of the better. These are the views of Mr. Bright who complained that if this Union was accomplished the result would be to burthen the Empire with the defence of these provinces and what position did Mr. Ayrton take? He would not commit himself so far as to oppose Union, but what he complained of was that millions of British money were to be expended in connection with a great highway between this province and Canada. Thus we find the British Government, and all statesmen who value the colonies as one of the great sources of the importance and influence of Great Britain among nations arrayed in support of colonial Union, whilst in opposition to this great scheme we find only the men who wish to get rid of the colonies altogether.

I must for a single instant call the attention of gentlemen opposite to the fact that they are bound by their own recorded votes in 1864 to vote against this resolution. I had the honour to move in the session of that year a resolution authorizing a conference to make a much more radical change than it is now intended to make in our constitution. It proposed a scheme of Union that would have merged our local institutions altogether—the Parliament and capital would have been transferred to another place. When I moved that resolution to appoint delegates for a Conference to bring about such a result, was there a man to raise an objection that as it would change the constitution, there should

be an appeal to the people. Where were the gentlemen who now raise these objections when I declared that this House had the power to do what I have said? There was no one then to raise an objection to such a course. They bound themselves to the constitutional principle that this Parliament had the undoubted power, and right to change the constitution of the country without an appeal to the people at the polls. But I can give them another illustration how lately it is that they have discovered this new constitutional doctrine—that it is not constitutional for the peoples' representatives, here in Parliament assembled, to discharge what they believe to be a solemn duty to the country. Can it be possible that these gentlemen have forgotten that in 1863, just before an appeal to the people, the Government of the day brought forward one of the most radical changes, a change in the constitution which, I have no hesitation in saying, would revolutionized England it propounded there to-morrow. This measure was to strike down one-third of the electoral body who were about to go to the polls. When we, on this side of the House, urged specific grounds that it had already been proved that the entire majority which they had obtained at the last general election had been subsequently lost at the polls, that they were only nominally the government, and that therefore they ought not to propose so radical a change before going to the people, we heard no such pathetic speeches from gentlemen opposite as we have had to-day, intended to have effect in the back settlements of the country? What had the hon. member for Guysborough then to say in favour of the people who were so ruthlessly to be deprived of their privileges. He stood here then one of the most violent and declamatory supporters of the Government, declaring that they would carry this measure, that they had the constitutional right to do so. Then he backed up his leader, Mr. Howe, who had put on record the most unequivocal testimony of the views of himself and the Liberal party on this question. It will be remembered that some 26,000 electors, rather taken aback at this attempt to change the election law, appealed to the Lieutenant Governor asking for a dissolution of the Legislature, and what was the answer? That the petitioners had a right to be heard? That such constitutional changes must be preceded by an appeal to the people? No! I hold in my hand the declaration of the leader of the Government stating that it was the undoubted right of Parliament to pass a law in defiance of the people. Yet the gentlemen who voted in support of such declarations are here to-day to express a mock sympathy which the people will never give them credit for. Mr Howe said:—"I am not one of those who shrink from the performance of a duty. I have never yet backed down through outside pressure, or waived my sense of right because of popular influence." He goes on to say:—"The hon. gentleman complained that no answer was ever returned to the petitions for a dissolution. Had they been sent through the Provincial Secretary, the proper official channel of communi-