

back to the period when the mother country gave us a constitution; what was the language of the Imperial ministry then? It amounted to this, "Only tell us what you want and you shall have it, you shall be governed according to the well understood wishes of your own people, we will not interfere, the constitution which you propose shall be the one that we will maintain." That constitution has continued to be ours from that day to this, and it is one that I will strive to guard. It does indeed come with a bad grace from men brought, I may almost say, from the backwoods of the country, who but for that constitution would never have dreamed of being elevated to the positions they now fill,—I say it comes with a bad grace from them to strike down the constitution from which they have derived such distinction. I trust that they will pause before doing so, and if they reflect for a moment upon the consequences of the present measure, if they reflect that when once done it cannot be undone, that this decree which we are called upon to pass will be irrevocable and irretrievable, they will see how great will be the evils that must ensue. If we have a ministry that is not agreeable to our wishes, and that does not promote the interests of the country, we may bear with it for a while, knowing that the time will come when the people will assert their rights and substitute better men, but in reference to this measure only pass it now and it will be passed forever—the doom of Nova Scotia will then be sealed. I have not said a word as to my views respecting union in the abstract. I find Nova Scotia a happy, prosperous, loyal country; I find her on the high road of progress and advancement, a country in which every man may pursue industry in any branch he may select, a country enjoying civil and religious liberty in the largest degree, I find her a comparatively untaxed country, enjoying blessings and advantages not to be found in any other country beneath the sun, and these are to be lost or to be perilled for what? Where is the necessity for the change? Until I can see some greater necessity than I now see, my banner shall be Nova Scotia for Nova Scotians, my device shall be that the privileges we now enjoy shall be maintained inviolate. At present "I seek no change, and least of all such a change as this would bring us." Mr. Speaker, I hold in my hand a resolution which I intend to offer in vindication of my position. I trust it will meet with the concurrence of a large number of members.

This resolution recites among other matters the fact that an unauthorized conference was held at Quebec. It further recites the proceedings, and generally covers the ground and antecedents of the present question. In reference to the present condition of the Province—I mean the present crisis of alarm and danger—I would ask in what position would every man who truly loved his country desire to see her stand? He would desire to see his countrymen one in heart, and hand in hand, without any question agitating their minds in connection with political considerations. Our people, especially at the present moment, should have but one object in view,—

to arrest the common danger and save the common country. At such a crisis it is above all things necessary, just, and wise, that there should be but one sentiment abroad—that of loyalty to the British Crown, and that of a determination to sustain the integrity of the British Empire. It is because an agitation such as this measure is inducing will produce consequences of an unfavorable character, consequences affecting the regard of the people for the institutions under which they live, and dividing their power to resist an enemy, if an enemy should venture an attack; it is because, in addition to the other objections which I have stated that I am apprehensive of such results as these, that I ask this house to pause before they consummate a union which the people do not desire—one in fact against which they have petitioned, and that at a time when they should be found warm in their allegiance, as united as one man to protect the soil on which they live and upon which they hope to die. In opposing this perilous consummation, I am discharging my duty to my constituents, to myself, and to the country at large. I do trust, that wedded though some gentlemen in high position may be to this measure, the house, in view of the present danger, will stop at the point of consummation of this act. It may matter not to me individually what the decision of this house may be; it may be that in the changes of political life, when the term of this Legislature expires, I may not be found again within these walls, or have the ambition to seek another country for the advancement of my position—but there are those behind us whose interests to all futurity are involved, and in their name I beseech the Government of the country, the constitutional guardians of the people, to pause, ere they force upon a loyal population a scheme against which the country is arrayed, and which must inevitably engender feelings which will militate in all time to come with the true interests of that common country within whose borders it is our pride and privilege to dwell. Entertaining these opinions, I offer for the consideration of the house the following amendment;—

"Whereas certain resolutions were adopted at a Conference of Delegates from the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and the Colonies of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, held at the city of Quebec on the 10th day of October, 1864, as the basis of a proposed Confederation of those Provinces and Colonies.

"And whereas such Conference was held without the authority or sanction of the Legislature and people of this Province.

"And whereas, since the holding of such Conference, and the adoption of such resolutions, no general election has been held in this Province, but three special elections in the important constituencies of Annapolis, Lunenburg, and Yarmouth, have taken place; and at such elections the people at the polls have expressed themselves as decidedly hostile to the proposed Confederation, and the members elected by such constituencies are prepared to act in obedience to the declared wishes of their constituencies.

"And whereas, during the last, and at the present session of the Legislature of this Province, petitions very numerous signed, and coming from every constituency in Nova Scotia, have earnestly prayed that this House would refuse its concurrence in the arrangement for the Confederation in question; and further, that no measure, involving a fundamental