

would pass it by rather than leave the Legislature when the country needed his services. Few men would have made such a sacrifice as that at which the Provincial Secretary sneers. We have been asked "what corrupted the Admiral and the General or the city of Halifax?" I made no such charge against any of them. This city is largely in favour of Confederation, because they believe that they cannot get the railway without it. Then we have been told that we cannot get an expression of opinion from the country. Sir, I ask why not? It has been said that the question will be largely mixed up with others—with the question of education, the railway, retrenchment, and other subjects, but I maintain that there is a mode of getting the opinion of the people—the way in which their opinion was obtained upon the Municipal Corporation bill. In that case the vote was taken upon the measure alone, and such a vote would settle this question in a single day. It has been said also that our only object is to upset the Government, but I ask is it not patent to every man that if this agitation ceased to-morrow gentlemen opposite would not have the ghost of a chance of occupying their positions again. Let them open a single constituency and obtain a decision either on this question or on the general policy of the government, and that decision will be conclusive. These gentlemen know that their fate is sealed, and they are afraid to meet it—for this reason, as much as for any other has this matter been urged on us this session. The Prov. Sec. took great liberties with a friend of mine and with me, for he coupled my name with his as that gentleman's masterpiece, in attributing base motives to him. It is said that when Mr. Howe's salary ceased he became an agitator from personal motives, but I happen to know that in taking this step he is incurring risks which few would run.—He holds letters from leading men in England recognizing his claims upon the consideration of the Imperial Government, and by the patriotic course he has taken he may have forfeited that consideration. I throw back then the foul insinuation that Mr. Howe has thrown himself into the scale because the inducements of salary have ceased. The Prov. Sec. spoke about "button-holing" and "sapping loyalty" in the same connection and this leads me to imagine another scene: I imagine a member of the House being sent for by a distinguished individual and being addressed in this language:—"my dear sir if you will only move a resolution in the Assembly asking the House to affirm the policy of union and leaving the details to be settled at the Colonial Office your services will be appreciated and recognized by Her Majesty's Government." I can imagine such an occurrence and I can imagine the person thus addressed though a poor man, with a prospect of his fortune being thus made, rejecting the proposal. Yet we are told that we must not speak of corrupt influences. The Prov. Sec. gave us an argument the other day on the subject of an appeal to the people, he said it was our constitutional right to deal with the ques-

tion. We may have the abstract right to do so but I put it to them one and all when we were elected three years ago if members had told their constituents that they would if elected destroy the constitution of the country, how many of them would have been here? The trust reposed in them was for a very different purpose, it was that they should transact the public business according to the well understood wishes of their constituents. The opinions of Messrs. Howe, Young and Johnston have been referred to in this connection.—these gentlemen said that the proposition must be ratified by the legislature as of course it must, but will any man undertake to say that either of them dreamed of such a change being effected without an appeal to the people? I have too much confidence in the patriotism of one and all of them to believe that they ever entertained such an opinion. We have however pretty good authority for saying that the constitution should not be changed without submitting the scheme to the people. Mr. Archibald in course of his speech at Temperance Hall last winter said:

*"It is for the people of Nova Scotia to ratify or reject what we have done. It is will or promote their interests—if they believe the result will be injurious and not beneficial, let them reject it; but if they feel as we have felt that their future prosperity and happiness are identified with, and inseparable from Union—if the time is now come for it—let them be equal to the emergency; let them accept the position which we believe the progress of events and their own true interests render necessary for their future happiness and prosperity."*

What did that language mean? Did it refer to this House or to the people? He knows he meant the people of the country. Mr. Tilley in addressing an audience at St. John, said:—

*"It was not the intention of the Government of New Brunswick to force the matter upon the people. It was now before them, and he asked for it a calm and candid consideration. He could assure them that if there is the least question as to the opinion of the people upon it, it shall be submitted to them at the polls."*

That was the language of one of the most enlightened statesmen of British America,—he went to the people with this question, and went down gallantly defending his principles. Let me read the opinion of Hon. Mr. Dickey, another of the delegates.

These are surely pretty good authorities, for here we have three of those gentlemen who are now pressing the matter on us inforcing the opinions which we hold. I have another quotation to make on this point from an authority which the leader of the Government will not venture to challenge. It is from the speech of the Prov. Secretary at Kentville, in reply to a charge from me that at Windsor he had made a speech ignoring the people, where he denied that he ever entertained such an opinion, and said he recognized their full right in relation to the question; and yet we find him to-day bringing forward stale arguments about the abstract right of this House to deal with the constitution.

*"If the people's representatives are satisfied that the country is opposed to this Union they can yet reject it or they can obtain a dissolution by asking for it. No Government could prevent it. What w*