

must in all Governments reside somewhere, is entrusted by the constitution of these kingdoms. All mischiefs and grievances, operations and remedies, that transcend the ordinary course of the laws, are within the reach of this extraordinary tribunal. *It can regulate or new model the succession to the crown, as was done in the reign of Henry VIII and William III. It can alter the established religion of the land, as was done in a variety of instances in the reigns of Henry VIII, and his three children. It can change and create afresh even the constitution of the kingdom and of parliament themselves, as was done by the act of the union, and the several statutes for triennial and septennial elections. It can, in short, do anything that is not naturally impossible.*"

I could, if it were necessary, quote other, many other high authorities to the same purport, recognizing and asserting the powers, rights, and privileges of Parliament as they are enunciated by this great authority. Powers and rights far above what this resolution asks this House to exercise; and, sir, I think I have established my right to ask the hon. member for Guysboro to produce to this house and the country the authority on which he founded the bold assertion that the members of this Legislature are forgetting their duties to the people when they undertake to consider for the benefit of the country, not a radical change in the constitution, but simply a modification of their present relations and circumstances.

If what I have read be sound constitutional law—if we have the right to consider and finally pass upon this question, I hope we shall not again be told we are ignoring the just authority of the people and the duty we owe to our constituents in our efforts to promote their interests by multiplying their sources of wealth, while we secure their enjoyment of all their just rights and privileges. And now, sir, we can legitimately examine the expediency of the proposed change, and enquire whether the Union of these Colonies be a proper and judicious measure on the part of the people of this country. But first let me refer to one view of the question which is perhaps of some importance, in the opinion of some, and has indeed been referred to in this debate. I refer to the position occupied in reference to this question by its present opponents in former times. It is quite true men may legitimately change their opinion on public questions, but in doing so they invite inquiry as to the motives by which they are actuated and the reasons for the change—and although I do not think it of very much consequence, nor will the people of this country, I imagine think it of much consequence, what have been or are now the opinions of the Honble member for Halifax, yet his position in this house as one of the leading opponents of Union and his well known and recognised connection with a gentleman outside of this house whose opinions exercise much more influence in the country than his own—make it perhaps worth our while to inquire whether it be true as the hon. member for Halifax has ventured to assert that neither Mr. Howe nor himself have ever been committed to a Union of these colonies. It is quite natural, Mr. Speaker, that a man like Mr. Howe who for many years has filled a large space in the public eye, who has borne a prominent part in the political contests and changes of many years, and occupied a foremost position in the discussion of the most important and grave public

question which have agitated the country for a quarter of a century—it is natural I say that the sentiment of such a man should be received by the country with some weight of authority. Mr. Howe has recently assumed a position on this great question which his mouthpiece in this house, the hon. member for Halifax as well as the hon. and learned member for Guysboro has sought to justify—while they have ventured to assert that Mr. Howe was never committed to a Union of these Colonies, other gentlemen have called attention to the resolution of 1862 and other public acts indicating his desire to promote this Union, unless indeed, we accept the shameless assertion that their measures were a sham and delusion. I shall therefore only detain the house by reading one or two paragraphs from a speech of former years.

It is not necessary that I should say one word derogatory to that gentleman, and I am sure I have no desire to do so. I shall compare his past with his present course, but I shall accord to Mr. Howe his due influence and position in this country. Unless I was willing to do so, I could not venture to ask this House and the country to contrast his former with his present opinions, and to ask the people to accept from his own mouth the evidence which condemns his present course and that of gentlemen opposite. When he chooses for personal or other grounds to recede from the position he occupied in former days, he occupies a position which, I may say, will not be accepted by the country as worthy of himself or of his past greatness. Nothing surprises me so much as the hon. member for East Halifax who is the Editor of the book which I hold in my hand entitled "Speeches and Public Letters" of Hon. J. Howe, who has prepared the very evidence on which I intend to convict both himself and Mr. Howe of attempting to deceive and betray the people of this country in the most important matter ever submitted to them, and who, on more than one occasion, endorsed the sentiments which Mr. Howe promulgated to the country on the subject. I wish, sir, I had time to quote a very great deal from the volume before me; it is one which ought to be read more than it is in this country at this particular time. If I wished to impress upon the people the necessity of a Union of the Colonies I do not think I could do it more convincingly than by scattering this contribution to our literature over the face of this country. Sir, it is filled with arguments in favour of Union, and therefore it is that the people who have accepted these opinions of Mr. Howe as of great weight ought to pause before giving their opposition to these same views when they are being carried out by his successors, and not to accept at the hands of his disciples or of himself views diametrically opposite to those he so long laboured to inculcate. Mr. Howe on various occasions, in the discharge of his public duties, advocated not only in this country but in Great Britain a Union of the Colonies; and perhaps no colonist (without derogating from the position of many eminent men who have justly acquired great influence in this country) ever obtained a higher position in the mother-