

appoint a delegation, if for no other object than a discussion of the question. He said he had listened with pleasure to the able and eloquent remarks of his Honor the Speaker, and in his opinion fully justified the attention he made to the persons (as he attributed to our delegates) by the Provincial Secretary of Nova Scotia, was not only justified by facts, but, it appears to me, came with much propriety from a gentleman holding the high position of Speaker of this House. Much as I regret the style which sometimes characterizes our discussions of public measures to our halls of Legislation and the columns of our press, I yet maintain that we compare favorably, in this respect with our fellow-subjects of the neighboring Colonies. I cannot but consider that an almost insuperable objection to the proposed union will be found in the difficulty of any Island Representatives attending in the winter season in a Parliament to be convened in either Nova Scotia or New Brunswick. When Dr. Tupper, in Nova Scotia, urged that union with Canada was not desirable, on the ground that his country would not have an equal number of Representatives in the Legislature, I would have liked to have asked him whether Nova Scotia or New Brunswick would be prepared to admit us to an equal voice in the deliberations of the associate Lower Colonies. Although the union between Upper and Lower Canada was arranged on the basis of each Colony having an equal number of Representatives, it is now sought by the latter to regulate representation according to population. In view of this fact, what guarantee have we that, after having cast in our lot with our neighbors on the principle of numerical equality of representation we may not hereafter have that principle abrogated? I see many difficulties of a practical nature in the way of this projected union, in addition to those which have been referred to. The rate of taxation would require to be adjusted with reference to our financial condition, as distinct from those of the other Provinces. The holding the winter terms of our Supreme Court would afford matter for serious consideration, for it could hardly be expected that the judges should cross the Straits in an ice-boss. While such questions as these are present to my mind, I still vote for the resolution which has been submitted, as being so cautiously worded that it commits members to nothing but the sanction of a delegation by which the subject may be discussed, and our ultimate action can afterwards be had.

Hon. Mr. WARBURTON.—Pleased as I have been, Mr. Chairman, at hearing the pertinent and lucid observations which have fallen from the lips of the hon. Speaker, I should have been more gratified if he had announced his intention of voting against the resolution, as I can see no necessity of putting the country to the expense of the proposed delegation. With that limitation, I heartily endorse every word of his eloquent speech.

Hon. Mr. POPE.—I must say, Mr. Chairman, that the speech which we have heard from the hon. and learned speaker does that gentleman great credit, and I feel myself constrained to record my opinions as being decidedly opposite to those advanced by the Hon. Col. Secretary. Without reviewing the statistics which have been brought before the Committee, I agree in the opinion that the appointment of a delegation is but an act of common courtesy. I cannot but admit the force of the argument that our isolated situation during the winter months presents almost insuperable objections to our Legislative union with the other Colonies. Had we been always united with them, we might be content to continue the connection, but, as the case is, we should retain possession of what privilege we enjoy. It may be said that we are a small country for the machinery of a separate government, but we would be in a far inferior position, if united. If representation is to be based upon the relative numbers of population, we, with a population of 84,000, would have our influence merged in a union with Nova

Scotia's 350,000 and the 200,000 of New Brunswick. Both of these Colonies are burdened with heavy liabilities, incurred on account of their Railways, the benefits of which we enjoy without the burden of their cost. And, as the argument that the union would introduce capital into the Island, I cannot recognize its force. Capitalists will invest their means in countries which, from the extent of their geographical area, and the consequent varieties of resources, offer the amplest fields for investment, and the brightest prospects of advantageous returns. The principal dependence of the people of this Island is on agriculture, and no man of realized worth is likely to invest it in a country where, for half the year, his attention must be devoted to keeping himself and his cattle from freezing. We have resources which, in some respects, render us small as is our territorial extent, second to none of our Sister Colonies; and if, as has been suggested, the business of shipbuilding should decline, our fisheries may justly be regarded as a permanent source of wealth. I own we no advantage likely to accrue from our union with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, or with either of them; and it is but right that members should express their opinions on the subject to be discussed by our delegates, who, by the express terms of the resolution, are precluded from pledging the action of the Legislature of the Colony. If the Capital of the United Provinces were to be fixed in the Island, there might be some reasons for our advocacy of a political association; but as that is not to be expected, I cannot imagine any benefits we are to receive from the change in our constitution.

Hon. Mr. LAIRD.—Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my gratification at what has fallen from the hon. Speaker, and, for one, I would not object to vote for the appointment of delegates if the representatives of the three colonies were to meet in the Island.

Hon. Mr. KELLY.—If I had a thousand votes, I would give them all in opposition to the resolution. What is the necessity of appointing gentlemen to consult on the subject of a union from which we can derive no benefits? I heartily concur in the expressions of approval which have been made of the remarks of the hon. Speaker, and agree with him in his opposition to the scheme.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—Mr. Chairman, the subject of a union of the Colonies has been matter of speculation among their public men for several years. While I have always been of opinion that benefits would accrue from the union of these Colonies, I readily admit the force of the argument drawn from the fact that we derive benefits from the Railways in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, without being required to contribute to the cost of their construction. The proposed amalgamation would not, as far as I am capable of forming an opinion on the subject, afford additional protection to the Island from hostile invasion. While each of the Provinces referred to is burdened with heavy debts, our comparatively trifling liabilities, not amounting, after deducting the value of our public lands, to more than about £30,000, will require careful consideration in any negotiations on the subject of our union. The people of the Island feel that our tariff is at present sufficiently heavy for the resources of the Colony and the means of the inhabitants, and one serious objection would be removed from my mind by the proper adjustment of our separate public debt in any scheme of union. My own opinion is, that a union is only a question of time—that it must occur sooner or later. Situate as we are at present, we are powerless at the Colonial Office on the most important subject of the Land Question, and it cannot be doubted that we would occupy a more influential position, if we formed a part of a great united province. The enlarged field of subjects of political discussion would elevate the minds of the people, and extinguish the narrow feelings which at present embitter the parties into which we are, and have been, divided. The assimilation of our currency