

must have known that the house was elected under our existing constitution, and could not change it without consulting those that elected them. Yet the Provincial Secretary was quite ready to strike down all existing rights and privileges enjoyed by the people, in order that he might march on to Ottawa.

But far and wide the spirit of the people asserted itself. Little by little a feeling arose which spread over the length and breadth of this province, and showed the government that they must pause in their rash career. In my own county, at first, much indifference was felt on the question; but as the discussion proceeded, a strong feeling of dissatisfaction at the scheme exhibited itself among all classes of the people. Before passing away, however, from the meeting at Windsor, let me say that the Prov. Secretary dwelt particularly on the report of Lord Durham, who may be said to have been the first to have brought this question before these provinces. That report is valuable, in consequence of its own intrinsic merit and the ability of its author; but we must all be aware that the mass of the people have never known anything about its contents, and could not, therefore, be at all affected by it.

Now, turning to the scheme itself, we find that it provides for a federal union of these provinces. I have no hesitation in saying that if the conference had devised a legislative union, it would have been preferable. Every one knows what the local legislatures will be under this scheme—very insignificant bodies. Another portion of the scheme provides that the Lieut. Governors shall be selected by the Governor-General at Ottawa. What class of men shall we, then, have for our local governors? These very men who formed the convention. But how would they be looked upon? The position of Lieutenant-Governor would become a mockery in the estimation of the public. I can understand the principle that induced the British government to elevate Mr. Hincks to a colonial governorship, and should like to see it extended to Mr. Howe who has far higher claims than the former to such a position; but any one must see that the people would never approve of any public man being made governor in his own colony. It has never yet been fully explained why we have been given local legislatures in this scheme. It might be satisfactory to the Lower Canadians, but it would never do for these other provinces. The municipal system that is in full operation in Canada West, or the very system of county sessions that exists here now, might have done the work assigned to the local legislatures. If the Lower Canadians would not agree to legislative union, an arrangement might have been made so as to give them the control of those matters in which they felt especial interest without interfering with the rest of the provinces. I am glad, however, that some gentlemen who formed part of the Conference had some respect for that section of Canada which has been so trampled upon by the Western Canadians for years past. It is known to many that Upper Canada has long been endeavoring to deprive Lower Canada of many of those institutions and rights which they value—the very principle upon which the union was formed it has been attempted to destroy. Just in that way would the Upper Canadians, in case of a Confederation, endeavour to override the interests

and rights of these maritime provinces. As respects the question of taxation, it has been so ably handled by the hon. member for North Colchester that I shall not attempt to touch it, except to say it requires no lengthy calculations to see that if this union were consummated our taxes would be largely increased, if for no other object than the defences of Canada, more especially the fortifications that have to be erected, and the gunboats that must be put on the lakes. The Canadians are now expected to defend the lakes by means of those iron clad monitors, and the expense of only a very few would be at least three or four millions of dollars. We have also heard that Hon. Mr. Geo. Brown, when he went back to his constituents at Toronto, from the Convention, told them in explicit terms that when this Confederation took place their canals would be enlarged, and that the North-West territory would be opened up. Millions of dollars would be expended for that purpose alone, and under these circumstances is there any man so blind as not to see the great burthens that will be necessarily imposed upon us by Confederation. As respects the proportion of representation that Nova Scotia will have, let me say at once that no other principle would have been acceptable as a basis except population; but when you look at the small number Nova Scotia will have in proportion to the Canadas, cannot you see she will be treated just as Cape Breton has been for years past. I admit in all sincerity that a greater desire now exists in this Legislature to do justice to Cape Breton, than was the case some time ago. Whoever is familiar with the history of legislation in this province is aware that no member from Cape Breton could for years raise his voice on behalf of that island without being met with sneers, if indeed he was heard at all. At first I was inclined to rather favour the scheme of Union for this reason; I felt it was better to be an appendage to Canada than to Nova Scotia, as we might then obtain more justice than we had received in the past from Nova Scotia. However, as I said before, I can see evidence of a disposition to pay more consideration to the section whose interests I have especially at heart. Gentlemen must know this, that the moment the Union takes place our grants for roads and bridges must be diminished, (for the revenue at the disposal of the local government will be altogether insufficient for local wants,) or else you must resort to that most unpalatable of expedients—direct taxation. The assertion that the commercial interests of this province would be benefited by Union has been scattered to the wind by gentlemen who have preceded me. Look at our trade returns, and you see that we send Canada nothing of those great products such as fish and coal, for which there is a free market at present in that country. What do we get from them except a few barrels of flour? If it is necessary to have a uniform tariff and currency, there is nothing to prevent it being done without Confederation—that has been conclusively shown time and again since this question was discussed. Now let me say a few words in respect to the reception of the scheme in England. We are all familiar with Mr. Cardwell's despatch—how heartily he approved of it. The Provincial Secretary told us that the English Government