

to consider with others from New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island the subject of a Union of the Maritime Provinces. That delegation was appointed, and a conference took place at Charlottetown, and somehow or other the gentlemen who went thither were spirited away to Canada. Now, I hold that these gentlemen had no authority from this house to proceed to Canada to deliberate upon any other scheme than that contained in the resolution laid upon the table last session by the Provincial Secretary. We may be told they were invited by the Governor-General, and that permission was accorded them by the home authorities. But what did they do in P. E. Island? Any one taking up the papers laid upon the table of the house, will see that the question of the Union of the Maritime Provinces was scarcely taken into consideration at all. And I have it upon the best authority—from one of the delegates themselves—from a speech delivered at Toronto by Mr. McCully—that the question of Union was not even approached in a spirit to assure success. That gentleman said:

"I suppose you will hardly believe me when I tell you that the representatives of the maritime provinces, who had been convened for the purpose of securing a particular constitution for themselves, having heard your delegates, actually adjourned with their work unfinished, if I perhaps may coin a word, *unbegun*.—(Cheers.)"

That is the way in which these gentlemen discharged their duty to this house and the country.

#### PLEDGE TO SUBMIT THE SCHEME.

Let me turn your attention, for a few moments, to another view of this question. Those gentlemen have come here with a resolution, re-affirming the desirability of a Union of the Maritime Provinces. They held a Conference at Quebec—entered into certain arrangements there—adopted the larger scheme. I admit at once they were at liberty to confer on the subject, but I deny their right on behalf of the people to adopt any scheme compromising this country. What had we at the commencement of the session? We are all familiar with the agitation that took place immediately after these gentlemen returned from Canada—with the public meetings that came off in Halifax, and in several of the rural districts. We all know the language that was put in the mouth of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, when he opened the present session. Was not one-third of his speech devoted to the particular topic of Union? The gentlemen who now surround him put into his mouth a pledge that the matter would be brought to the notice of the house at the present session. Why is it not here? Did not these gentlemen promise to bring this question of a Confederation of the whole of the Provinces before us. It is unnecessary that I should read from the speech of the Lieutenant Governor, because we are all familiar with it. But let me give an extract from a speech of the Attorney General of Upper Canada (Hon. J. A. McDonald,) who made use of these words in introducing this subject of Confederation to the notice of the people of Canada.

"Every one of these governments (the governments represented at this conference) was pledged to submit the scheme of Confederation, as prepared by the Conference, to the Legislatures of their respective Provinces."

Could there be language more explicit than that? Why, then, is not that scheme here? Hon. E. Tache, President of the Legislative Council and Premier of Canada, also said after the result of the elections in New Brunswick was known:

"Notwithstanding the expression of opinion given at the hustings in one of the provinces concerned, the government of Canada had determined to go on with the project by all the means they had in their power, (hear, hear), and although it might be painful to them to see their fellow delegates and friends of the measure defeated; it did not follow that the new men entering Parliament in New Brunswick or in any of the other Colonies would be adverse to the scheme, which the Executives of those Provinces were bound to submit to their respective Legislatures."

Here again we have it from the lips of the venerable Premier of Canada that these gentlemen were pledged to submit the question to this house—that even in New Brunswick the Executive, formed since the elections, were bound to submit it to the people of that country. And have we not from the mouth of the Provincial Secretary himself a distinct pledge that the measure would have been submitted here. Let me here draw your attention to a report of his speech delivered at Truro, in which he pledged himself to submit this matter to the people if the house, and if they did not agree to it, that he would not remain a single hour a minister of the crown, without an appeal to the people. Let me read from the *Colonist*:

"Upon the subject of dissolution the Provincial Secretary declared that the duty of the government was too plain to admit of any doubt or dispute. They had deferred calling Parliament for a full month later than they intended, on purpose to give time, till the latest possible period, for agitating and discussing the subject in every possible way and manner. The dispatch of the Secretary of State for the Colonies commanded them to submit the measure immediately to Parliament, and he could say frankly that if those who could deal with it, after hearing all that could be heard or said on both sides, reject it, as at present advised, he should not remain Minister of the Crown a single hour without dissolving the House, and referring the subject to the country."

In the face of these declarations, I ask how it is that these gentlemen dared to come down and present any other scheme than that which, through the Lieutenant Governor, by the leaders in both branches of the Legislature in Canada, and the solemn pledge of the Provincial Secretary himself, they promised to submit to this house and this people. How does the matter stand? In virtue of the pledge made by the respective governments,—even after the result of the elections in New Brunswick was made known—the government of Canada brought the question up, and passed it in their Legislature by large majorities. In the little province of P. E. Island, where confederation has but few friends, the government, with a manliness that did them credit, brought down the scheme and were defeated upon it. What more? In New Brunswick, the gallant Premier, leading the government, went to the hustings and fell under the force of public opinion. And it is only in Nova Scotia that the administration, ignoring their functions as a government, shrank from the responsibilities of the position, and violated their solemn pledges and recorded engagements.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

Passing now away from this matter,