

statesmanlike view; they held that when England loses the Maritime Provinces she begins to go down in the scale of nations—that when we are gone, with our 60,000 seamen, our mercantile marine, our noble harbours and fisheries, and our inexhaustible coal fields, then America becomes the first naval power in the world, and England must stand second on the list. I share in these opinions; and it is because I see in Confederation the beginning of England's decline and fall, that I have been heartily opposed to the measure. It has been said that the people's delegates in England manifested great contempt for responsible government. Sir, I hold that those who have had entrusted to them the petitions of well nigh 40,000 of the people—equal to about two-thirds of our adult male population—that they are not unauthorized men, and that they occupy a prouder position than the gentlemen sent by the Government, but not representing the opinions of the country. There are members sitting here who know that they are here contrary to the wishes of their constituents—who have been requested to resign their seats, and who, if they had the spirit of Englishmen, would not for a day occupy their present positions. We were so far authorized as to be recognized as duly accredited delegates at the Colonial Office, where we were treated with deference and respect. Mr. Bright on this subject holds the language of every Englishman I ever met, he says, "give the people of these Colonies the right to speak, let them decide their own future, let them, if they please, confederate, join the American States, or remain as they are in connection with this country." Then we are told that the intelligence of the country was in favour of Union. I should like the Prov. Secy. to tell us how he arrives at that conclusion. When at the last General Election his party were returned with a large majority, he boasted that there was a large and enlightened public opinion in the country, but when he looks around the benches of this house and knows that not one of its members dare face a constituency, I ask him how he can make the statement that the intelligence of the country is in favor of this measure? I have been taunted with saying that Nova Scotians should pay pound for pound with the Canadians towards the common defence. I believe that the time has come when our people cannot escape paying a reasonable contribution, and the question has come to this: shall we pay to the mother country, which with all her armaments of war is able to de-

send us, or to a new nationality without an army or a navy, or the means to create either? Or on the other hand shall we pay to the United States? We must pay such reasonable sum for our defence as we can afford, and I ask if there is any doubt that England would grant us by far the most favourable terms. I assert boldly that these Maritime Provinces must belong to a great maritime power—the first in the world, if they are allowed—and if not to the second, they cannot and will not be governed by Canada. Our position forbids that we should be governed by a people living in the Canadian backwoods. We must, therefore, belong either to the mother country or to the United States, and if we are once separated from England there is no question about our final destination. And while on this point I may remark that in Great Britain I encountered highly intelligent gentlemen to whom I spoke of the strong feeling of loyalty and attachment which prevails among us, and the earnest desire of the people to remain forever connected with England, to equally share her dangers and glories,—I said we would like to be treated as a county of England, as Kent or Surrey, sending members to the British Parliament, and what was the reply: "Well your sentiments do you honour, but we cannot reciprocate them; we care little or nothing about you." We have been asked for a precedent for the course that we urge, and I in return have asked gentlemen opposite to show us a precedent for their action. It is an unfortunate precedent that I can point to for their conduct—that of legislating Ireland into the Union contrary to the sentiments of the people. But even for that measure a majority of the Irish Parliament was obtained,—by what means we know. By what means the majority was obtained in this Legislature we do not know now, but there the majority was secured by corruption most foul, and history is filled with the record of the misfortunes that have grown out of that forced union. Is it not plain that if this union be forced on us you will make Nova Scotia a second Ireland on this side of the Atlantic, but so near the United States that only a few miles of water separate us? By adhering to a policy of coercion you are breaking the loyal hearts of the people of this country. It is not yet too late to refer the scheme to our constituents, and if we can get their consent I pledge myself to never again lift up my voice in opposition to it, but will use every effort to make the measure work well. If, however, the people are forced into the