

as a compensation for the great loss we shall sustain in going into this Union. Then I say that in 1863, when the elections took place, the question, as a public question, had been set at rest, and did not come under consideration at the hustings. Take the speech of the Provincial Secretary in 1864, when he introduced the resolution for a Maritime Union, and you will find that the idea of a Confederation with Canada, whatever he may have said about it in his lecture at St. John, was not entertained by him as being likely to yield any practical result. He says in that speech:—

"The proposal which was made and advocated with such singular ability by my hon. friend the leader of the Government several years ago in this Legislature was for a *Legislative Union* of the whole British American Provinces. On that occasion the whole subject of a Union of the Colonies was so fully and ably discussed by the leading minds of both sides of the Legislature as to render it unnecessary that any great amount of attention or time should be occupied in going over the grounds which have been so ably detailed. But difficulties have been found—and I may say insuperable difficulties—in grappling with that which so many of the ablest minds in this country have advocated in connection with this subject. The union of the Maritime Provinces with Canada has hitherto presented insurmountable obstacles.

"I believe that to be a question which far transcends in its difficulties the power of any human advocacy to accomplish."

In 1864, when this gentleman was on the delegation, he declared to the people of Canada that the people of this Province were uninformed on this question. That was a year after the elections had taken place. This was his language as found in that report of his speech published by Mr. Whelen, of P. E. Island, on page 67:—

"Uninformed as the public mind in the Lower Provinces was on this question, the visit and the statements made by the gentlemen connected with the Government of Canada have aroused attention to it,"

Here, then, we have the acknowledgment made, after the election of this House, that the public mind was not awake to it,—not even when this question was about to assume a practical shape; and yet we are now told that the country was not taken by surprise, and in the House of Commons that the subject was discussed at every polling booth.

The Prov. Sec., however, claims that the intelligent sentiment of the country is with him;—if that be true the hon. gentleman's course is simple and plain,—what objection can he have to presenting this question to the people and saying, "will you who are to be affected for weal or woe by this measure accept it?" The answer he gives is that party feeling is so high that a fair decision cannot be obtained at the polls, but he has the proof that party feeling will not interfere when he has seen gentlemen from his own side of the House rallying into opposition, and leading gentlemen formerly opposed to him in politics forgetting the ties of party and going to his support. This is the best proof that the question overrides party feeling, and that feeling will not interfere with its just consideration at the polls. The question has assumed such importance that no man should allow party spirit to influence his conduct in opposition to his just convictions. I for one honestly believe the measure to be wrong, and I will co-operate with any man holding this opinion and willing to oppose the scheme from beginning to end. This, I claim, is the only question be-

fore the country,—all other parties and all other questions are for the time being set completely aside, and the only plank in the platform of the party with which I wish to co-operate is the determination to stop or repeal the measure. Men, to whatever side they may belong, may express various opinions about the present state and proposed organization of the empire, but the only principle which I can recognize is that this thing must be stopped. Because a leading man connected with the Province has chosen to write an article on the state of the empire, the Prov. Sec. has undertaken to say that is our platform, and that we are bound to stand or fall by it—that we are bound to present something in opposition to the scheme which they have submitted. But I tell him we possessed a satisfactory system of government before this scheme was brought here. Let me now say a word or two respecting the Organization of the Empire. It has been time and again stated and acknowledged that the weakest portion of the British Empire is B. N. America, and we, placed alongside so powerful a neighbour see and feel the truth of the statement. When last night this subject was touched, my imagination pictured the horrors of a war between England and America with Nova Scotia for the battle ground as it would be. The picture presented I cannot find language to describe, nor can the most vivid imagination truly paint the desolation which would come upon us should the demon of war drive his horrid ploughshares over this fair Province. The very graves of our fathers would be uprooted and their cherished dust scattered to the winds. Every man sees and feels, moreover, that the chances of war with us are greatly increased by our connection with the mother country. Yet still if treated as men, permitted to enjoy legitimate rights, the British feeling within us will lead us to maintain at all hazards, our allegiance and our connection with Old England, and to contribute our all; if it comes upon us, to give new triumphs to British arms and new lustre to British fame. Placed in this position—the weakest of the Empire—what does Mr. Howe propose? Simply, to strengthen and protect the weak point by bringing to our aid all the might and power of two hundred and fifty millions of British subjects; whilst the delegates would bring at most but thirty millions to the help of a people perhaps divided in sentiment, or as we verily believe leave us to the protection of this new nationality alone. As was said here last evening Nova Scotia must belong to some great naval power. We are so situated that a gunboat can shell almost any part of our territory, and not only the treasures of coal and minerals we have within call for protection, but our commerce without; our ships on every sea demand it; and yet this scheme which is being forced upon us will leave us only to the protection of Canada. What! leave us only under the protection of Canada? What absurdity! Why, sir, it could not protect one of our potato shallops. Put one in the harbour and bring to its protection the whole navy of Canada, and there is hardly a fifth rate naval power in the world but would consider it a light task to take possession of the boat and perhaps pelt its defenders to death with the cargo. And then as to the protection of