

gratitude of the people of these provinces greater than another it is owing to the fact that through his public Provincial career his great intellect, his great powers have been directed towards consolidating all British North America. His great powers have been brought into play earnestly and effectually in removing class, party, and religious antagonism—in fact, every antagonism that could divide the people that inhabit British North America and to direct their mind and attention to the great value of the institutions they possess, and to the best means of consolidating and perpetuating those institutions. That hon. gentleman, in response to a request made to him, delivered a lecture on the consolidation of British North America, and instead of being met by any demonstration on the part of the people or the press of this country that would lead any public man to suppose that a Union of British North America was not in the highest degree acceptable, he delivered that brilliant oration amid the plaudits of a large, influential and intellectual audience in this city, and at the conclusion a vote of thanks was moved by hon. Mr. Johnston, and seconded by Mr. Howe. Challenged as the government have been with having failed in their duty to the people of this country when they permitted the discussion of the question of Union with Canada, it is but right that I should turn to the sentiments not only delivered by leading statesmen of two parties in this country, but delivered in the presence of an influential body of citizens and received and accepted by the intelligent press of the country, as deserving, in the highest degree, of the approval of the people. Hon. Mr. Johnston said, in moving a vote of thanks to Mr. McGee:—

“To himself it had been the occasion or peculiar interests, inasmuch as the subject of it was one on which his own mind had been for a long time occupied. He had long been desirous that we would rise above our isolation and littleness, and occupy a position far superior to any we have done.”

“He knew that we have some public men that have become eloquent on the greatness and resources of Nova Scotia; but notwithstanding all that had been said, and it might be natural to say a great deal, he could not avoid coming to the conclusion that we were very small in deed. Why the entire of the inhabitants of this Province would not be more than sufficient to fill a first class city. We have got the elements of greatness and self-government, but on a very small scale. The same may be said of New Brunswick. The latter Province is a noble country; and Canada we know is replete with inexhaustible stores of wealth and greatness. And looking far back we ask what shall comprise her bounds, broad and unlimited in their expanse? It is, then, our duty not only to the present, but also the succeeding generations, to effect a union of the whole, Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, having one interest and one cause. It has been said by some that we can do little in moulding our future condition; but I say that we can do much, and it is our duty to look into the future and provide for it. We may also waken up to the necessity of giving the question its due importance when, perhaps, it may be somewhat too late.”

Mr. Howe, in seconding that resolution, said:

“Mr. Howe went on to remark that it would be in justice to the lecturer to say more, further than he was with him in all he said. He was for a Union of all the British North American Provinces, but he was for an Intercolonial Railroad first. Then the road

would bring about the Union. It would enable the Canadians to see our faces, to become familiar with us, and to see the number of 1000 ton-ships which we are building, which with our other wealth and resources, we are willing to throw into the one great stock. He thought a Union should not be delayed till we had drifted into difficulties. How short sighted were the English statesmen of old who lost them the thirteen States, when the difficulty could have been arraigned in a month, the horrors of the Revolutionary war prevented, and all our race living at peace and harmony at present without bickering and animosity which prevails in their midst. Talk of the fall of Quebec being a source of sorrow to the inhabitants of this Province. It would be more. If the St. Lawrence were in the hand of our enemies we should be compelled to beg permission to tear down the British flag. What he wished for N. Scotia was that she may be the frontage of a mighty Colony; upon which it may be truly said the sun never set. No man can look upon Halifax and its environs, its harbor, its citadel, and say it was made for this Province alone.”

“The United States has drifted into a civil war; and we may drift into a tight place from which it will be difficult to extricate ourselves. The States might assail us; but if we had a railway by which troops could be sent from Quebec or other military stations to the threatened point we would be saved. Mr. Howe said that he hoped when Mr. McGee returned to Canada he would be able to say “I have been down among those people who live on fish and lobsters, and there I seen keen politicians bickering upon small topics, but when the great subject of national union was brought before them then all minor difference was disregarded and I found them uniting and pushing and cheering me on in this labor of love.”

These sentiments were delivered at the lecture of Mr. McGee amid the plaudits of one of the most intelligent audiences in the city, and quoted by the press from one end of the province to the other, and met the hearty approval of this country. I do not make these quotations for the purpose of bringing into question the attitude of any public man in this country. I am now asking this house to consider whether the course the government pursued in appointing delegates to confer upon the question of a Union of British North America was not one that they had a right to suppose would receive the hearty concurrence of this house, and meet with the enthusiastic approval of the people of this country.

It is well known that after the resolutions which passed the legislatures of the respective Provinces had been placed upon the journals, the Government of Canada was reorganized by the combination of both parties upon the avowed platform of endeavoring to form a Union of all British North America. When this fact was made known, what did it evoke? A sentiment of hostility on the part of these Provinces? No! Did we who had been suing at the hands of Canada as late as 1861 by the act of this Legislature, and asking, as Mr. Howe did ask, for a conference such as that recently held at Quebec—did the people of these provinces when they learned that the government of Canada had been reformed and reconstructed upon the basis of endeavoring to bring about a Union of British North America, view that proposition with disfavour? In the Province of New Brunswick, in the chief city, the citizens came together—the Board of Trade at the head of the movement—and one of the first acts which followed that declaration to the world that the government of Canada was reconstructed upon such a basis