

for the purpose of preserving the rights and liberties which we now enjoy?

The hon. member says that the Delegates are bound to the Quebec scheme. I shall be prepared to answer at an early day the question put by the hon. member for Richmond, and I am only surprised that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Annand) should not have awaited that answer before addressing the house as he has to-day. I tell the hon. member that this was the obligation that rested upon every gentleman that was engaged in that Quebec Conference; it was by every constitutional and honorable means in his power to endeavor to bring about the great results that that scheme proposed to accomplish. I ask him what is the position of this question to-day? Has it not changed in its aspect since the House was called together at this present session? Last year an appeal was made to the people of New Brunswick, and an overwhelming majority was returned opposed to the Quebec scheme; but what has taken place since? No one can believe that so great a change has suddenly taken place as we know has actually occurred. The fact is this: the question was referred to the people at the polls; but is there a man here who believes that the election was decided squarely and fairly on the question of Union? No, the Government had been in power for ten years; they had drawn upon themselves that unpopularity which all Governments must expect to encounter, conduct the public affairs as they may. The opponents of Confederation, combined with the great body of those who were determined at all hazards to have a change of government, and the result was that an immense majority was apparently returned against Union with Canada. What has occurred since? This Government, thus brought into power by the action of the people at the polls, have modified their opinions on Confederation through the force of circumstances, and influenced by the legitimate power and influence of the British Government, have come forward, and in the Speech at the opening of the session propounded a policy of Union of British North America. It is not a matter of doubt that whether a dissolution takes place or not, or whatever may be the result of the vote of no-confidence that has been moved, and on which a discussion is proceeding, New Brunswick is prepared with an unanimity that cannot fail to produce the deepest impression on the mind of every man, to come forward and accept the policy of the British Government, and accomplish a Union of British North America.

The hon. member took occasion to outline a scheme. He has entirely abandoned his policy of yesterday. In the journal which he has seized for the purpose of writing down Confederation, he has had as many policies on this as he has in relation to everything else, and it is only the other day that he took the attitude that he and the opponents of Confederation would not propound any scheme whatever. Let me invite the attention of the House to the paragraph from his paper which was read by the hon. member for Inverness, and ask whether he (Mr. Annand) has yet to hear the first argument in favor of a Union of British North America. On the 24th January, 1866, he says:

"And what then? Are we indifferent to the

future of British America? Have we arrived at the conclusion that nothing should be done? That we can remain forever in our present condition? On the contrary, while we claim that these Colonies, at all events the Maritime Provinces, never can be bettered by any change in their political situation, we feel that they cannot, in the very nature of things, always continue as they are. They may, it is true, go on for years, and enjoy their present prosperity, but after all the time must come when they will be required to form new relations, whether with each other and the Mother Country will largely depend upon the exercise of great tact, wisdom, and forethought on the part both of British and Colonial statesmen."

"But it is because we feel that we must, sooner or later, make our choice between the mother country and the United States, that we desire to see this question of Colonial Union, now that it is fresh in the minds of the people, set at rest; it is because we earnestly and fervently pray that our connexion with England, instead of being weakened, shall be strengthened, that we repeat the opinion uttered two months ago, that, with the sanction of the Crown, a new Convention shall be held for the purpose of considering the future of British America—what are to be the relations of these Provinces with each other, what their relations with the mother country, and what guarantees will be required to secure the unity of all."

In the face of this declaration made in January last—that the time had come when the people of this colony had to choose between connection with the United States of British North America or connection with Great Britain—he now undertakes to tell you that he has yet to hear the first argument in favor of Union.

I ask the hon. member whether leading minds of these Provinces have not assembled already to confer on this question of Union.

MR. ANNAND—No!

DR. TUPPER—Did not the Government act in good faith when they undertook to deal with the question, as one entirely apart from party politics? When they invited Mr. Howe, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Locke, Mr. Archibald, and Mr. McCully to combine with them? If there were gentlemen in either end of the Legislature that stood in more deep and strong antagonism to the present Government than others, they were the two gentlemen who co-operated with us on this great question. The hon. member may say we should have selected him. Why, he would not have reached Windsor before he would change his opinion half a dozen times.—(Hear, hear.) Why he would have signed his name to a declaration of his opinions, and repudiated it two months after. All that could be done in the interests of the people was done, and although the Quebec scheme may not meet with general concurrence, yet I believe, that the interests of the Maritime Provinces were pressed to the last point to which they could be carried in an Intercolonial Conference, and the only means by which an improvement could be obtained would be by some measure that would bring an independent arbitration to bear. The hon. member has expressed great respect for the Imperial Government, and yet he degrades Her Majesty's Ministers by saying that men recognized as the most honorable and able in the civilized world—men of