

Mother Country will be the same, any more intimate and secure, than those which the separate Provinces now hold to her.

I don't know that I fully comprehend the purport of my hon. friend's quotation from the *Standard*, but I understood it to be a censure upon the British Government for allowing the Reciprocity Treaty to drop, with a view to create a feeling in favour of Confederation, and that no effort was made on their part or on the part of Canada to renew it. I am surprised at such a statement being quoted in this house, where the facts are so well known. The treaty was not dropped by Great Britain; it was terminated by the positive act of the United States; and so far from Canada not having exerted herself to obtain a renewal of it, her public men went further with that object than the people of this country could demand. They were willing to enter into arrangements not secured by treaty, but dependent upon reciprocal legislation; and I consider it as fortunate, and I believe the people of this country consider it fortunate, that we escaped a position which was one of degrading subservience to the caprices of American legislators. I apprehend that if there was a mistake at all in these negotiations, it was on the part of the British Government and on the part of the Canadians to exhibit an anxiety for the renewal of the treaty so great that the authorities of the Union were led to believe we could not exist without it, and that to keep us without it would drag us into a closer connection with themselves. We have lived and we have prospered without it, and having shown the United States that their trade, however important it may be, is not indispensable to us, we have laid the foundation for a renewal of the treaty upon equitable and fair terms.

My hon. friend seems to have a great horror of a future national existence. I should like to ask him what he looks forward to in the future. Does he imagine that for all time to come these Provinces, which in 20 years hence will count 8 millions of people, and which within the life-time of many now born, will comprise a population larger than that of the British Isles; does he suppose that this enormous population is for all time to come to be governed from Downing street? Eighty years ago a country with a population less than we now possess, irritated at what it considered oppressive exactions on the part of the Mother Country, asserted and achieved its independence. That country has added to its population in a century more than England has since the Norman conquest. Does my hon. friend imagine that by any possibility these States could have continued to this moment dependencies upon the country, from which they sprang. No sir; there is an infancy and a youth and a maturity in nations as there is in men, and while I yield to no man in my desire to retain the connection which we have with the Parent State, while I trust and hope that the day may be far distant when the ties that unite us may be severed, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that in the future—however distant that future may be—we shall have to assume the responsibilities of a separate national existence. When that time shall come, it is the interest of Great Britain as it is our interest, that we should enter up—and youth.

on this change of position with institutions adapted to the new attitude we shall have to assume. That we should be able to continue as the friend and ally of England, the existence which we began as her dependency. And that we should illustrate in the affectionate attachment we shall bear to the parent state, the result of the liberal and generous treatment which she has dealt out to us in our infancy.

I have asserted that I do not consider it constitutionally necessary to send this question to the polls. I do not mean to assert that it would not be exceedingly desirable to know the opinion of the people on the subject. But I can see no certain way of ascertaining that opinion. If this were the only subject upon which the people were asked to express their views, their verdict might be considered as an answer; but if there were an election to-morrow, and if the present Government should be overthrown by the result, who is to analyze this result—who is to define what portion of the vote is against Confederation—what portion against the school system—how much of the result may be due to personal or political unpopularity, entirely independent of this question.

But I am at a loss to understand the arguments of the hon. member for East Halifax. He asks in one breath for an appeal to the people, and in another sneers at it as useless. In Nova Scotia there is no appeal—the act of the Legislature is with him the act of a tyrannical majority. In New Brunswick there is an appeal—and the verdict passed at the polls is with him the result of corruption. Thirty-three men are returned in favor of Confederation to eight against it. If any verdict could be considered to express the unmistakable convictions of the people this would be it, and yet the hon. gentleman treats it with contempt! He says he will not stay to inquire how this result was effected. This is not a hasty expression in the heat of debate. The hon. member has put his hand to this slander of the people of New Brunswick in a solemn document subscribed by him in London, addressed to the Earl of Carnarvon. In referring to the first decision in New Brunswick adverse to Confederation he says:—

“On the methods by which that decision was reversed it is painful for a lover of freedom to dwell; but Your Lordship is aware that in Jeffreys' time many a jury were induced to reverse their decision when threatened and brow-beaten by the court.”

What does this mysterious allusion mean? Has the hon. gentleman any distinct idea in his own mind what he does mean? One thing is very certain—it is impossible to please him. We have to choose between the tyranny of a majority and the tyranny of a Jeffreys. If we carry the Confederation in the Legislature, no language is so strong to express his disapproval; if we carry it by an appeal to people, my honorable friend has such a holy horror of the result, that he will not stay to inquire how it was brought about. My honorable friend from Halifax has a great dread of corruption. A gentleman of high position in Canada—a man who stands perhaps second to none on this continent for personal character and integrity—a gentleman who had been for many long years the friend and political ally of the hon. member, undertook a year ago to compliment him upon his talents, and to suggest the pro-