

The Col Secretary.—What about Nova Scotia?

Mr. HENRIKSEN, of Nova Scotia, is in a different position. He has a great deal to gain by Confederation. Halifax will likely be the terminus of the Intercolonial Railway, and thereby become the empire city of British America. These provinces can claim no compensation. The reason which weighs with Unionists in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have little application to this Island. For instance, the Intercolonial Railway makes the other Provinces part and parcel of Canada; the iron horse annihilates time and distance. With respect to the political part of the Report, I think we have reason to complain. The principle of representation by population is sought to be enforced on too sweeping a scale. But as this principle is a *sine qua non* with the people of Upper Canada, and is, I believe, at the bottom and root of the Confederation scheme, we might expect to see it applied to the Lower House; but I see no reason why the constitution of the Upper House should not have been assimilated to that of the Senate of the United States; but it does not attach much importance to this, as I believe the more representatives we have the more our difficulties would increase. We have no men of fortune amongst us; at any rate, none foolish enough to engage in politics. Men members from distant parts of the Island, from the North Cape and East Point, can spare a few weeks during the winter months to attend to their legislative duties; but it would be found a very different matter to be obliged to leave home and business, and that, too, very likely in the winter season, for three or four months in the year to attend the General Legislature at Ottawa. The public men of this Island cannot afford to do so, even if willing. The sacrifice of interest which a seat in the Confederate Assembly would entail, would be greater than our public men could afford; and if to remedy this they were adequately paid, then their constituents would begin to suspect that their personal interests might outweigh their regard for the interests of the Colony. I doubt much whether men of stake, and really interested in the welfare of the country, would be found willing to offer themselves. Indeed, so far as our representation is concerned, it might as well be wiped out of the Report altogether. There is another objection to the new constitution, as it applies to this Island. What, I would ask, looking at the wide range of subjects reserved for the General Government, will there be left to engage the attention of our Local Legislature? As it is, with the management of all our affairs, the subjects that most frequently engage our attention are not of a very broad or elevating character. If, from the subjects to be assigned to our Local Legislature we withdraw Education and the management of our highways, matters which, when once properly provided for, do not admit of being tinkered at every Session, what will be left for us to do? We might have a party for bringing in a measure that all pigs should wear rings in their noses, but on such a question it would be difficult to keep together either a Government or an Opposition, unless they were to differ as to the description of metal the rings should be made of; but to be serious, I believe if we went into Confederation we would find our Local Government a nuisance too cumbersome and expensive for the work assigned it, and before long would be petitioning to have it done away with, and to have municipal institutions instead. This very Building with its empty walls and untenanted offices would stand a growing remonstrance against the policy of the Hon. Col Secretary and his Union friends; he would be right at the sight of its decaying walls. Somebody may say to him what the great Irish Orator, Curran, once said to a Speaker who had been instrumental in bringing about the Irish Union. Curran, who was one day sitting in the watch at the West Office, which was then opposite to the late Parliament Buildings, when the nobleman, who well knew that the Union was some subject with Curran, said, as he passed him, "Curran, what do they mean to do with that useless building?" "If any parliament were to take the sight of it," said Curran, "they would be bound to hear you say, say my Lord, saying Curran, 'I never saw a house so much abused as this was not a house, it was a ghost.' We are told that by going into the Union we will rise from being a small and obscure Colony to be a part of a great country. This may, in some

degree, be true; but, practically, we are called upon to yield up to a very great extent the control and management of our public affairs to a great body, which once parted with is not easily regained. But the argument which Unionists dwell most strongly upon, as proving the necessity for Confederation, is the question of defence. They argue that unless we unite we must soon become absorbed in the American Union. If there is really danger just now of our Republican neighbours adopting an aggressive policy; if they should take it into their heads to cross the Canadian frontier for the purpose of carrying out the Monroe Doctrine, or to identify themselves for those recently sustained, and for which they may choose to hold Britain responsible, would a Political Union work such a change in our present position as to convert us at once from helpless Colonies into a powerful Confederacy? It must be many years hence before these Colonies will be able, aided by the British arm, to defend themselves against an invading foe, extending as they do over such area, with an extensive and exposed frontier, and vulnerable in so many points. No doubt it is high time that these Colonies did more for their own protection than they have hitherto done. They have drawn largely from the pockets of the tax payers of the Mother Country for the purposes of fortifications and the maintenance of naval and military forces among them. (This Island is not open to this charge; for very many years she has cost Britain nothing in this respect.) Colonists ought to remember that many of the tax payers at home who contribute to our protection are unable to bear their public burdens than we are. There is one argument urged by anti-Unionists which I do not agree with, viz., that when united, in case trouble arises, our young men will be liable to be drafted off to Canada and the other Provinces, there to assist in fighting their battles. This is not likely to be the case, as our small Militia and Volunteer force would be required for our own defence, which the safety of the other Colonies would require to be efficiently maintained, the chances are in such a state of things that not one man would be withdrawn from the Island, but men would have to be sent here. But even if it should so happen that they were taken off to assist in the defence of the other Colonies, ought we to complain? Our British interests are intimately bound up with those of the other Colonies, in a national point, at any rate, and when Canada and the other Provinces have to succumb to a foreign power we will have to follow suit. In helping them we are fighting for ourselves; and that, too, under more favourable circumstances than the sister Provinces, for we would not have to meet the foe at our firesides. The further the scene of conflict is removed from one's door, the better; for the most terrible of all the horrors and devastation that follow in the track of war is having women, children and country exposed to the cruelty and fury of a merciless soldiery. This consideration ought to make ready at all times when the necessity arises (and God grant that it may never occur) to assist our fellow Colonies, and that with a good will too. Our position as British Colonies must, for many years, depend upon the protection afforded us by the Mother Country. Separate or united without that aid we shall be powerless to defend ourselves. England's European interests, her position as first among the nations, more perhaps than her wide spread possessions, oblige her to maintain her present powerful military and naval force. Those forces require stations. England is not prepared to throw off her wealthy West Indian possessions, not to say anything of those Colonies. She has to maintain a navy for out here, which costs no more than at home, and to maintain that force the coal mines of Cape Breton and Nova Scotia are necessary. The threat that Unionists hold out to us that we will be cast adrift if we do not unite, is for the purpose of frightening us into Confederation. They must, at any rate, produce stronger arguments than they have now, before they can expect us to be convinced that it is so. I believe that Britain is willing to untie the apron strings and lend us off to do for ourselves when we are strong enough to stand alone; but I do not believe she will ease us off until we are able to protect ourselves. Men members in favor of the scheme had better direct their attention to the other points of Confederation, and endeavor to show us that our material interests will be improved by the proposed Union. That I think is the great point for us to consider just now, and that

ERRATUM.—On last column of preceding page, only the first sentence of the paragraph, given as a quotation from Mr. Galt's Speech, should be read as his. The citation marks and the break ought to have been placed after the words *General Government*, on the second line.