

these; but contemplating the whole Empire, including over thirty colonies, scattered over all parts of the world, consisting of every people and tongue, and situate in every climate, is it possible to conceive of a power but that of Great Britain that could have so long discharged such immense responsibilities as the possession of this Empire throws upon her, and that too almost within the life time of a man, necessarily involves. See how different from ours is the position of all these Colonies. Australia is at the antipodes, and is defended by its distance from a foe. India is separated from the only power that is likely to interfere with British rule by impassable mountains and trackless deserts, the islands of the Pacific and Australasia are protected by distance and their remote position; but here, all along the two thousand miles of continuous boundary between us and America, we have in our immediate presence the military power which makes British America the weakest spot in the Empire. No British statesman can fail to see that of all the points at which the Imperial power can be assailed, this presents the elements which make a war most to be dreaded. Do we wonder, then, that despatch after despatch has been sent by the home authorities, requiring us to put ourselves in such a position that England, if called upon to defend us, can do so successfully. Is it any wonder that we find the Colonial Secretary, time after time, almost imploring us, if we have any desire to retain our allegiance to the Crown, to put ourselves in such an attitude that the Crown can protect us? I feel that if there were no commercial advantages to be derived from striking down antagonistic barriers; if our material interests even were not promoted by Union, we could not gracefully resist the expression of such a desire on the part of those to whom we are indebted for protection, and of whom we are even now imploring aid. For they say, "we are ready to place the whole resources of the Empire at your back, we will defend you as long as you desire to remain with us; but we claim it a right which our position gives us to offer you advice as to the attitude you shall assume, and in which, we think, you can best be defended." Even admitting that there were no commercial advantages in the proposed Union, admitting even that we did not agree that the British government were right in the belief that Union would aid our defence, is there a man in the country who could look a British statesman in the face and say "we will accept your protection, but we decline your advice?" This argument alone, the deference which is due from our position as the protected and defended, to those who protect and defend, I feel to be irresistible. I have never hesitated in this assembly from the first hour when the proposition for Colonial Union was mooted, from giving it my support. Since it assumed a definite shape and I became a party to the Quebec scheme I have felt my conviction of the soundness of the principles upon which that scheme was based, strengthened by reason and reflection. I claim no right to dictate to others their course of action. The gentlemen with whom I have been associated, have a right, if they choose, to change their views, but I do not feel at liberty to do so while I retain

my present conviction. I have put my hand to public documents which bind me in honor to the same course to which my convictions lead. As I have said my opinion of the Quebec scheme is entirely unchanged. I believe that it guards our interests as far as we had a right to expect them to be guarded in an Intercolonial arrangement; but if larger concessions can be obtained, there is no member of this House or of the Quebec Convention, belonging to the lower Provinces, who would not willingly accept them. The resolution now before us leaves the question open only to a change in our favor—Canada is bound by her Legislature to go at all events as far as the Quebec scheme. The Lower Provinces alone are dissatisfied, and if any alterations are made, they must be in the line of concessions to them. If we can secure guarantees and privileges not embodied in that scheme, it will be in entire accord with the feelings of this House and those members of it that attended the Convention, and as the proposition now before us will secure us at least the benefit of that scheme, and possibly some others, I do not hesitate to give it my support, and have much pleasure in seconding the resolution.

Hon. PRO. SECRETARY, in reply to a remark from Mr. ANNAND, said that the passage of the resolution would enable a scheme of union to be given effect to by the Imperial Parliament but that one of the conditions would be that the existing Legislatures would not be interfered with, and would continue to sit for the term of their election.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON introduced a bill to enable the City of Halifax to erect a slaughter house.

Wednesday, April 11.

The House met at 3 o'clock.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The House went into Committee and passed the following bills:—To appoint an additional Health Officer in the Port of Halifax, to postpone the ensuing sitting of the Supreme Court at Halifax; to authorize the sale of the old Baptist Meeting House at Caledonia; to authorize the sale of Mount Zion church at Milton, Queen's; to protect the navigation of Cow Bay, C. B.; to incorporate Little Brookfield Pier Co; to incorporate East River Coal Mining Co; to amend the law respecting Sheriffs; relative to assessment in the County of Halifax.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON reported up a bill to provide for the appointment of Special Constables in the city of Halifax.

Mr. ARCHIBALD reported up a bill relative to assessment; he stated that the object of the bill is to subject to assessment those persons who have large incomes and yet have no visible property to be taxed.

Mr. Coffin and Mr. Locke objected to the bill as it might operate hard y on poor working men, fishermen or others with only limited incomes; but Mr. Archibald said that they might be protected by a clause when the bill came up on committee.