

and their failure are the subjects, and the consideration should be approached with an earnestness and the decision made under a sense of responsibility not to be exceeded in the discharge of the most solemn religious duty.

**MR. WARBURTON:**—Mr. Speaker, I did not think that this question would be taken up this evening. As, however, it has come up for discussion, and as it is expected that every member will give expression to his views on the question, I shall briefly state my opinions. I have always been opposed to this scheme if we are to have a Union. I would prefer a Legislature in a Federal one, under which this House would become a mere debating club, with no power save that of taxing the people. Last Session we appointed a delegation for a specified purpose—to confer on the subject of a Union of the Maritime Provinces. The Hon. Col. Secretary has stated that Union is strength. It may be so; but a comparison of the "character" recommended by the Report before us, would only be a Union of the Lion with the Lamb; we would be devoured by the Canadian. The hon member for Belfast told us that under the Union we would pay less taxes. I cannot see how that can be the result. We have to defray our proportion of the expenses of an army and navy, and of the fortifications necessary for the protection of Canada. The operation of the tenant system in this Island proves that our people cannot pay the rates imposed in that country. The Act which passed this House last Session precludes the idea of any relief being afforded to the tenant under Confederation, for a law we passed must be obeyed. I, for one, opposed its passage, and we have no reason to suppose that the United Government would abolish it; for, if they should do so there would be no security for any man's property. I agree that we have no influence at the Colonial Office. While I believe that the tenantry would have a better chance of freeing themselves from the Rent Roll system under the stars and stripes, I myself will never consent to live under any other than the old flag of Britain, under which there are no people on this continent who enjoy as much freedom from taxation as ourselves. In Canada it is well known that the taxation is heavy; we increased our Tariff, but the people do not feel the operation of it as they would that of a system of direct taxation, such as obtains in Canada. This system properly adjusted would, I admit, be found to be the cheapest; but the people cannot be persuaded to adopt that view. There is a great and insuperable dread of direct taxation. The principle of representation by population, as embodied in the resolutions of the Conference, I cannot agree to; for, under it the Confederate Parliament we should have no influence. Sir, I believe that nine tenths of the people of the Island are opposed to a Union either Federal or Legislative. I myself shall use all my endeavors against it inside these walls and throughout the country, and if my constituents disapprove of my conduct, they can readily get some one else to represent them. We have heard hon members enlarge upon the glory of the experiment. It might be that if, by supporting the proposed Confederation and assisting in bringing the Island within its embracing fold, would obtain some high office in Canada from the Confederate Government, but considerations of that nature do not weigh with me. In conclusion, I repeat that I am opposed to a Union of any kind, but if we are to have any, I prefer a Legislative one to the mongrel scheme adopted at Quebec.

The Debate was then adjourned.

MONDAY, March 27

It was read and consideration of the papers relating to the Union of the Colonies.

**Hon Mr. HENSLEY,** Mr. Speaker, I have heard it stated that the talent in this House was enlisted on the side of the Union; assuming such to be the case, and I am not in the habit of making any speeches, which, under such a state of fact, must, of necessity, be productive of no benefit, I am happy to console myself by the reflection, that we have, at least, a numerical superiority; as there are some 25 or 26 members who are opposed to "all the talent" on this question. A question of this magnitude should be approached free from political or party bias. When the matter of Confederation was under discussion last Session, the idea was expressed, and very generally, I am inclined to think, was only the theoretical statement, we would be enriched by our connection with the Province of New Brunswick. The Provincial Secretary of New Brunswick has written, at the suggestion of that Province, in favor of the Union, and has been added to warrant the opinion. Well, Sir, if such would probably be the effect of our connection

with New Scotia and New Brunswick, I am only coming in the conclusion that we would be entirely swamped if we went in contact with Canada. No doubt, the idea of forming part of a great country is very captivating, but it is really more appropriate and solitary people, that cannot furnish us with the force in our own island. I call to mind that we are part and parcel of the great British Empire. The important question for our consideration is, whether we are bound by the action of the Quebec Convention. It is quite clear that we are not. That Convention was held without any authority from this House, and the Delegates had no power to agree to any decision on the subject, but by the almost, merely to report to the House. Forgetful that they agreed to an formal document with one before us, as it seems to occur in the idea in the world that they possessed powers to treat with, make a binding arrangement. It has been said, however, that we shall be required into this Confederacy. I would ask what foundation exists for such an assertion? Whence does it come? We have no despatches before us indicating such an eventuality. In fact, the documents submitted to us lead to the belief, in my mind that we shall be allowed to deal with this matter as we please. I believe that the fact is that the Canadian feeling, in general Union of the Colonies would be of service to themselves, sent Delegates here with the view of commanding their project to the favorable consideration of the Legislatures of the Lower Provinces, and I do not blame them for doing so. The terms of the Report before us are, in my opinion, very unfavorable to this Island. On the scale of representation proposed, we would be without the slightest influence in the United Parliament. It is true that, if we went into the proposed Union, we would have no right to export as large a number of representatives as either of the Lower Provinces, but then, if, or why should we throw away our independence which we now enjoy? There would, of necessity, be an increased tariff under the Union, and before I can admit the force of the argument that Canada and New Brunswick will supply us with boots, shoes, spirits and other articles of manufacture and at a lower rate than we can get them at present, I should like to be satisfied, as to their present ability, to supply themselves with those articles. Such returns of importations into these two Provinces, for the year 1853, as we have before us, seem to me rather to indicate an entirely different state of things in that respect. Now, Mr. Speaker, if the people of those two Colonies cannot, with a high protective tariff, furnish the articles I have specified in quantities sufficient for their own requirements, it is not to be supposed that they can supply them to us. Our chief, because most advantageous, trade is with the United States and Great Britain, and as long as we shall find it to our advantage that it should be so, it will naturally seek those channels; and if we come under the influence of a higher Tariff we shall be taxing our best customers and crippling our most profitable channels for commercial interchange. I cannot think that Great Britain will look favorably on a scheme which, so far as these Lower Colonies are concerned, will have the effect of placing heavier duties on the importation of her manufactured goods.

**Hon Mr. DAVIES:**—This question, Mr. Speaker, is, in my opinion, forced upon us. If the States were now in the same position as they were before the outbreak of the Civil War, it would oppose any measure of the sort, but they have now become a great military country, whose boast it has long been to carry out the Monroe doctrine, and to spread the principles of republicanism over the whole Continent. The Imperial Government has expressed its willingness to aid us. It has said, "that you can towards your own defence, and we will supplement your efforts." We are too small a people for separate and independent action, and that the termination of the present Civil War is at hand may be inferred from the fact that the captain of a blockade-runner told me during the last winter that the game was up; and we are all aware of the state of feeling which exists in the Northern States and Great Britain, which will most likely find expression in an attempt to restrict our trade.

No boundless Ocean confers any power on the Atlantic. But the whole hemisphere is now in the hands of the United States.

Frequent allusion has been made to the debt of Canada, but that debt has been principally incurred in the construction of public works of great value and utility. If we were to be absorbed into the United States we would be compelled to assume a far greater burden than those in which we would be likely to incur in Canada. I agree that Confederation would exercise a certain moral influence in our favor, but would prefer to remain as long as we