

ought to remember our great indebtedness to the Mother Country, and to take care that our resolutions should not be the cause of some estrangement of feeling towards us on her part, and instead her to reward whatever may do some small influence towards her in the present conjuncture. Some again said that if we refused to go into the Union, no course would be open to us but that of annexation to the United States; but annexation to the United States would not be our fate, even if we desired it. The Imperial Government, ignorant as they might be concerning our trade and resources, knew too well the importance of the geographical position of Prince Edward Island—the key to the St. Lawrence—to allow us to annex ourselves to the United States. Some said it would be better for us, at first to go into Union as grumblers, than to be obliged to go in afterwards as beggars: there was nothing disreputable, they said, in grumbling—it was a British privilege; but begging was positive degradation. That might all be very fine; but, he maintained, there would be nothing mean in going in by begging, even at the eleventh hour, if, by remaining out until then, we could obtain better terms than were offered to us by the Quebec Scheme. He said, with the hon. member for the Third District of Prince County, (Mr. Sinclair,) that to give us better terms was not impossible; but he believed that Canada would never, of herself, consent to give us better terms. He (Mr. Brecken) opinion then was that our best policy would be to keep out until Canada, in her eagerness to include us in the Union, should offer to treat with us on fairer terms; and then, should we find that we were suffering by keeping out, self-interest might induce us to accept the best terms we could get. The second Resolution, he said again, was too strong. To say that no terms of Union that would prove advantageous to our interests and well-being as a people, could be offered, was certainly saying too much and going too far; but, when he took into consideration the object to be attained by so wording the Resolution, which was the rendering it impossible for the Government to consent to the appointment of delegates to the projected London Convention—a course which, if adopted, would in all probability result in a repetition of the Quebec agreement—he was quite prepared to vote for it, too strong as, in its *prima facie* sense, he thought it. If Delegates were appointed, by our Government, to attend the London Convention, even for the purpose of opposing the Quebec Scheme, and endeavouring to procure a modification of it for our benefit, he feared they might, as at Quebec, be won over to the opinions of the Canadian and Nova Scotia Delegates in favor of it. Still he would like that Resolution to be remodelled, if that could be done without an acknowledgment of the principle of a Union on the Quebec basis; for, as it stood, a position was assumed in it, from which possibly we might hereafter have to recede. It was the duty of the House, however, to speak out clearly, plainly, and without ambiguity.

Hon. Mr. McEACHEN. He was happy to be able to endorse the Resolutions exactly as they had been submitted by the Hon. the Leader of the Government. They were strong; but not too strong. He agreed with the hon. members (Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Brecken) that were we to admit the principle as set forth in the Quebec Report, that was the possibility of its being made just to Prince Edward Island, we would be drawn into it. If we allowed the small end of the wedge to be insinuated, it would soon be driven through. He was glad to hear the hon. and learned member for Charlottetown, (Mr. Brecken) allude to the right claimed by John Bull to grumble and to be stubborn when

called upon to resign any thing which he believed himself entitled to hold; and to hear the hon. member then base thereon an argument for the people of the United Kingdom. John Bull, stubborn in the retention of their free constitution. Such stubbornness was certainly "becoming" in a "free people"; but although he would not deny that the hon. member John Bull had an hereditary right to assert that privilege, yet yet, would say it became them not—the descendants of the men who were conquered by the Normans and lost their liberty at the battle of Hastings—as well as it did the descendants of those men whose ancestors—the Caledonians of old—fled back from their mountain fastnesses of liberty the conquering eagles of Imperial Rome. He (Hon. Mr. McEachen) was a descendant of those unconquered heroes of the North; and he would never consent that, in asserting our right to preserve our free constitution, with all its rights, privileges, and immunities, we should adopt the cowardly, cringing tone in which it suited venality and corruption to plead for the attainment of the objects of their selfish designs. There was no reason to fear that we should be driven into the projected Confederation. The people of Prince Edward Island had a Constitution as well as Canada; and, if they did their duty, they would never lose it. Mr. Cardwell would, no doubt, be glad if he found us willing to agree to go into the Union on the terms of the Quebec Scheme; but, if he found we were not willing, he would not dare to force us into it. If once, like the Hungarians and the Poles, we should be deprived of our Constitution, we would never be able to regain it. He would, therefore, support the Resolutions, both in the spirit and the letter. They were certainly strong; but they were not too strong for him. We know, said the hon. gentleman in conclusion, what we enjoy under our present free Constitution; but we know not what we should have to endure, were we, by a Union with Canada, on the terms of the Quebec Scheme of Confederation, to be deprived of it.

Hon. Mr. HENSLEY. As to the first Resolution, which went to reaffirm the decision of the House, in its last session, upon the question of a Union of the British North American Colonies, to the effect—that any Union of those Colonies which should embrace Prince Edward Island, upon the terms and principles set forth in the Resolutions of the Quebec Conference, would not only be unjust to the inhabitants of this Colony, but prove disastrous to their dearest and most cherished rights and interests as a free people, enjoying the blessings of a priceless Constitution guaranteed to them by the Imperial Government of Great Britain,—having heartily concurred in that Resolution when it was first affirmed, it was not necessary, perhaps, for him to say more than that he still firmly adhered to the opinion then expressed by him of its propriety. And neither did it appear to him to be necessary that he should, in his opposition to the Quebec Scheme, restate the arguments which, whilst speaking upon the first Resolution, had been so ably brought to bear against that Scheme by the hon. and learned member for Charlottetown (Mr. Brecken), with every word of which he agreed. He would, therefore, proceed to give his views touching the propriety of the second Resolution, which declared that the House could not admit that a Federal Union of the North American Provinces and Colonies, which would include Prince Edward Island, could ever be accomplished upon terms that would prove advantageous to the interests and well-being of the people of the Island. He looked upon the declaration in that Resolution in much the same light in which it had been viewed by the hon. member for the Third District of Prince County (Mr. Sinclair) and the hon. and learned member for the Be-