

triotism of New Brunswick, (as we would that of Nova Scotia,) if we doubted that at an decision. I trust we will at an early day see reaction on the part of the public men of that province that will place this question in an entirely different aspect. I believe that this hostile action on the part of New Brunswick is most deeply to be deplored in the interests of all B. N. A. I regret, however, to say that a large amount of hostility has also been excited in various sections of Nova Scotia in respect to this question, and the petitions which are now on the table would render it exceedingly difficult for any government to ask an immediate decision, but whilst there has been a vast amount of energy, exhibited—whilst thousands of people have been induced to petition this Legislature on this question of Confederation, a comparatively small number of these petitions have pronounced against Confederation. There are not 3000 persons in the entire Province who say they are opposed to the proposed Confederation, notwithstanding the scheme has been misrepresented, and arguments of the most fallacious character used against it—and that party influences have been thrown largely into the scale—although the attempt has been made to induce people to oppose it by petitions largely circulated, the majority of the petitioners who are here state that they are not prepared to say whether it would be for good or for evil, that we should have Confederation and ask the House to pause before irrevocably committing itself to what would be, I believe, for the advantage of the country. I believe that at an early day, these parties having been fully informed on the subject, will be prepared to come hence by tens of thousands, and ask the Legislature to consummate this scheme of Union. I tremble, sir, when I think of the results that the action of these Provinces may have upon the public mind in England—that the steps which are in progress for the security and defence of British North America may be interfered with and the efforts for our protection may be paralyzed by the fact that in presence of a great danger, these Provinces have permitted that isolation to continue which can only lead to connection with the American Republic, and opposed that consolidation which in co-operation with the power which England was prepared to put forth, would give us security and avert the peril that is now so imminent.

The scheme devised at Quebec has passed through the most trying of ordeals triumphantly—after being submitted to the closest examination by the press of England, it has come out with encomiums such as no scheme ever devised by any body of public men has ever received before. It has secured the approbation of the most intelligent and influential section of the press of British America. It has been adopted in Canada by both branches of the Legislature with an unanimity such as reflects the highest honor on the patriotism and the intelligence of that country. In New Brunswick, P. E. Island, and Nova Scotia, it has enlisted the support of almost the entire religious press of the country, as also that of the most intelligent and independent of the secular press. Having obtained the support and co-operation of the leading and most influential public men in the different provinces—of the great bulk of the intelligence, wealth, and in-

fluence of the country, it is placed in a position which gives to this house and country, and to all British North America the best guarantee that in a little time, when it has been fully examined and discussed, all classes will vie with each other in bringing about the adoption of a constitutional change so necessary and advantageous to all.

UNION OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

I have stated in the outset that a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces is desirable in case we are Confederated, and and still more indispensable in case we are not to be at once united with Canada. Under these circumstances have I moved the resolution which I now hold in my hand. I can only say that if gentlemen will examine the remarks I made in this house last winter they will find that I considered the Union of the Maritime Provinces was one of the most important means to secure a union of all British North America, and most desirable in such a contingency. There are gentlemen present both inside and outside of these benches—who were connected with the delegation to Quebec—who will bear me out in the assertion that I always advocated the lesser union in that light. And at the very moment when I was prepared to concur with the rest of the delegates from the Maritime Provinces in adjourning the question of the smaller union until the larger question had been considered, I advocated the former as almost as essential and important if we remained out. The whole objection that is raised against the diminished importance and and expensiveness of the local governments and legislatures would under Confederation be swept away by a union of the Maritime provinces. Therefore, instead of bringing forward this question as a counter-proposition to the Confederation of British North America, I regard it to-night as I did a year ago, as an important and great step towards securing that greater union—as a means of placing these Maritime provinces in a united and influential position under Confederation than we would have if we entered it separately. How this proposal may be received by New Brunswick and P. E. Island, it is not for me to say. I may admit there was no prospect of getting Prince Edward Island into the proposed Legislative union, even if the Canadian delegation had not attended the conference at Charlottetown. Granted as I would have been to see P. E. Is. and form a portion of the great Confederation, I did not regard their action either in respect to the smaller or greater union as a matter of vital concern at all. All that is necessary is that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, united as they are by every tie of common interests should be in a position to have that union. Even if the larger union were impracticable and could never take place, still it is desirable that New Brunswick and Nova Scotia should be united. It would expand on trade, advance our influence, and accomplish many of the same results and bring about advantages that would be received from the larger scheme of union, only in a smaller degree.

Having trespassed so long upon the patience of the House I will not occupy the attention of gentlemen longer than to express the hope that this resolution will meet with the concurrence of this Legislature and of the Govern-