

in other respects, are, in the opinion of this House, so unfair to the people of Prince Edward Island; thus sacrificing our commercial and financial interests for the sake of securing the co-operation of Canada in a military point of view, feeling assured that so long as we remain a loyal and attached Colony of Great Britain, the powerful aid of that great country will continue, and therefore, to be extended to us, in common with the other North American Dependencies of the British Crown.

*Mr. LITTLE, Member.*—That this House, disagree to the recommendation of the Quebec Convention, and, on the part of Prince Edward Island, emphatically declines a Union which, after a serious and careful consideration, it believes would prove politically, commercially, and financially disastrous to the rights and interests of its people."

*Hon. Col. SECRETARY.*—I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, for your judgment, the question whether the leader of the Government, in giving notice of his intention to move the House on this matter, it was not competent for me or any other member to propose other resolutions for the approval of the House. The matter comes before us as an avowedly open question, and therefore, I assert that my action evinces no want of courtesy to the leader, or any member, of the Government.

*Hon. Mr. ROPE.*—The question, Mr. Speaker, which forms the subject of both sets of resolutions, is the most important which has ever occupied the attention of the Legislature of this Colony; and approving of the abstract principle of the proposed Union, I regret that I must oppose the measure, for the reasons that I have stated, as adopted by the Quebec Conference, and do not offer, as my opinion, fair terms to the people of this Island; but I must be remembered, in the discussion of this question, that our immediate position, the absence from outside of materials, and the difficulty, I think almost an impossibility, of obtaining them from sister Colonies during half the year, places us in a position with this question, in a position totally different from that of Nova Scotia or New Brunswick. These Provinces are geographically connected with Canada, and have within themselves the materials requisite to constitute them manufacturing colonies. As to the argument that our trade would be increased by the Union with Canada, I cannot recognize its force, for we produce the same description of articles as that country can or could supply as with. Our trade must naturally be with Great Britain, the United States, and the West Indies, the producers and manufacturers of which we require. The high tariff of Canada would raise the cost to the consumer of goods from these countries much higher than it is at present on the Island, and finally believing that the true principle of trade is to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market, I should be doing violence to my own convictions, if I affirmed by my vote any other rule. I have said, Sir, that I entertained objections to the details of the scheme. Among these objections, I may mention the principle of representation by population. A very simple calculation will show that the adoption of this as a standard would entitle the city of London to send to the British House of Commons no less than seventy representatives, and the city of Montreal in the Confederate Parliament would have a representation greater than that of this whole Island. It is a little way from the belief that in a few years the population will be so increased by the influx of the tide of immigration that the Island would lose in the halls of legislation even the small voice which she might raise at her entrance into the Union. It is not to be supposed that the increased taxation which, it is not denied, the Canadian tariff imposes, will have any other effect than that of driving from our shores those who would naturally seek in enlarged fields of action more ample returns for their labor, and greater means of meeting the liabilities imposed upon them. (The military phase of the question is not worthy of much consideration, for if an invasion of Canada by the people of the United States should take place, it would involve, as a matter of course, the necessity of retaining all available strength in each of the other Provinces for the defence of their respective territories. While I admit, as cordially as any, that it is the duty of every man to contribute, as far as he can, to the defence of the country in which he lives, and that it is not fair to the taxpayers of Britain that they should bear at the exclusive cost of our protection, I am willing to grant a reasonable portion of that duty to the Mother Country, the army and navy of which must be kept somewhere; and her experience shows that somewhere they may be maintained as cheaply as in the Colonies.) In conclusion, I may state that

while I give the delegates credit for sincerity in their proceedings, my opinion is that they went further than they were authorized or justified to go.

In accordance with a suggestion of *Hon. Mr. WILKINSON*, the discussion was postponed until the papers connected with the subject should be printed.

SATURDAY, March 25.

Debate on the Union of the Colonies resumed.

*Hon. Col. GRAY.*—Mr. Speaker, It might reasonably be expected, and honorable members may consider that it would be more in accordance with the elevated character of a project, which, having engrossed the minds of the statesmen of British America for many years, has at length culminated in the phase in which it now attracts the attention of the people of not only these Provinces and Great Britain, but also of our neighbors in the Great Republic who are anxiously watching our proceedings, that I should elaborate the argument in support of my own View, but, Sir, I do not at present intend to enlarge upon the features of this great question: a Confederation of the varied and gigantic interests involved, the benefits which must inevitably accrue to all British America were we confederating the strong and indissoluble bond of brotherhood from Newfoundland to Vancouver. However desirous I might be, under a state of public opinion other than that which at present exists, to apprehend in a far more extended sense than one of mere local interest, the consideration of a measure which has for its object the consolidation of many hitherto isolated and dissipated fragments into a Confederation which will form a state as large as the entire Continent of Europe, yet it is not my present intention to do so; neither do I intend to offer any comments upon the resolutions which my hon. friend, the leader of the Government, in accordance, doubtless, with the desires of a large majority of members of this House, has now submitted for our consideration, but I shall confine myself solely to a few observations on those points which apply more particularly to the immediate condition of the people which I have indicated, as evidencing the motives and reasons which actuated me in earnestly desiring that we may have the good fortune to be admitted within, and to become an integral part of the proposed Confederation.

*Mr. Speaker.* We all know that our free trade with the United States is about to cease. Already has notice for the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty been given by the American authorities, and, when this shall have been finally acted upon, we must look elsewhere for markets for our produce, or submit to a taxation on it in the ports of the United States which will be almost prohibitory; therefore, as we are peculiarly, as agricultural people, the great object of our solicitude should be to look abroad and enquire where we may best secure ready markets, and as near to our own doors as possible; for it is obvious that if we can have easy access to markets in rich and populous cities in our midst, we will receive far better returns than if we are obliged to have recourse to places remote, and only to be reached after long and tedious voyaging. Sir, I believe that we may safely assume that in a very few years, when Confederation shall have taken effect, Sir John alone will be ready to contribute a little Halifax raise unless every acre in this Island be cultivated like a kitchen garden. Let us consider the vastness of these two cities, for great as their natural advantages now are, all pale before the contemplation of what they are destined ultimately to become. Let me instance the rise and progress of two places somewhat geographically situated in the past—Singapore and Chicago. When that eminent man, Sir Stamford Raffles, first suggested the idea of founding that famous emporium for the China trade, how the enemies of progress lifted up their eyes in amazement! how they ridiculed the idea! how great the ruin which must ensue from the adoption of the policy proposed! But what was the result? Soon he was enabled to write, (I quote from memory his own words), "From an insignificant fishing village, our town, in three years, has a population of ten thousand; our lands are rapidly rising in value, and we have every reason to expect that, in a very few years, we shall have ten times our numbers." How truly the prognostics of this great man have been fulfilled, this wonderful mark of commerce, with its hundred thousands of population, bears, at this day, ample witness. Look again at Chicago. In the year 1838, it had a population of fifty thousand; twenty years after it had a town of eighty thousand. The tide of emigration must flow to British