

The island was at first only represented by two members out of all proportion to the representation of Nova Scotia. We afterwards petitioned for a repeal, and two out of the four members then representing Cape Breton voted against it. About twenty years ago a large petition was sent to England, and a legal gentleman employed on the subject in London, so that the statement made is inaccurate. Even now Cape Breton can scarcely get justice at the hands of Nova Scotia, and session after session we are sneered at by even leading politicians. I attribute the strong feeling of the people of Cape Breton on the subject of Confederation to the treatment they have received at the hands of Nova Scotia. We have not yet a fair share of representation. In the case of the present union, however, we enter on more favourable terms even than either of the Canadas, both as regards representation and the funds to be placed at our disposal.

Mr. Blackwood's Speech.

MR. BLACKWOOD:—As I intend to support the amendment, I feel that I should like to say a few words before the vote is taken. I support it on the principle that however finely argued the case may be in reference to constitutional authority, there is a sense of right and wrong which tells us that this privilege belongs to the people, and if there be no precedent in favour of the course, we urge it is time we made one when the constitution is to be changed, and when the eyes of the world are on us. If ever there was a time when the feelings of the people should be consulted it is the present. The time of the house will shortly expire, and if an election were held the measure could be completed shortly afterwards. I do not consider that within this house is concentrated all the wisdom of the country. We have had Mr. Howe's opinions quoted to us but I do not see that we should consider his views as the subject of discussion now, or the views of any man, but the position and interests and feelings of the people of Nova Scotia. I do not entertain an opinion favourable to the scheme for the organization of the Empire because I think its features could not be carried out with satisfaction to all the Colonies.

With reference to annexation, I may say that I never could feel otherwise than degraded by being subjected to the Stars and Stripes; but in making the charges of disloyalty which have been made, I think that justice has not been done to those expressing their opinions on this side of the house. They have not said, or sought to convey the impression, that they favour annexation, but that they are opposed to any union, and desire to progress as we have been progressing. The people of Nova Scotia have no idea of joining the United States unless they are driven to it; but if you stir up hostility by such legislation as will embitter their minds, and for that purpose take advantage of the position which the Government occupy, the British feeling will be driven out of their British hearts. I feel it due the people to speak out boldly, for if ever there was a time when their feelings should be consulted, it is the present. Let us not take the opinion of this or that individual, but the opinion of the entire country, and by that decision I am content to stand or fall.

Mr. Churchill's Speech.

MR. CHURCHILL:—In the discussion of a question of such vital importance it appears to me that it would have been wise to have allowed more time for consideration than has been given us. From the very moment this subject claimed my thoughts, the responsibilities connected with it have pressed upon my mind with a weight beyond anything that I can express. I have never given to any individual my opinion, and when asked what my opinion was about this great question of Confederation, I have replied that it was not one of so small moment that an opinion could be given hastily. I have not consulted my constituents on the subject, nor they me, but I have viewed the matter in its broadest aspect, and nothing has occurred to shake the opinion which I have formed, although in some respects I have been delighted with the speeches to which I have listened. It is not in the power of any living man to comprehend and grasp the entire subject,—the results lie in the future, and will reveal themselves only after years have rolled round. Therefore when my opinion has been asked I have felt disinclined to give it. Suppose gentlemen were about purchasing Canada. Would they use many words about it? Would they not rather ponder deeply and say but little, and measure the language they used rather than make lengthy speeches? Last session I intended to have been present and to have recorded my vote, but I was unavoidably detained—my mind was made up then as it is to-night. The question now before us is not whether we shall have this union or not—that was decided last winter by an unexpected and sweeping majority. The house then delegated a number of gentlemen to proceed to England, and to make a contract on our behalf, and we all know the result, and every man in Nova Scotia might have known what the result would be with England anxious, Canada anxious, and Nova Scotia willing, constitutionally willing.

It is not fair to ask the legislature to undo what it did last winter when it fixed the destiny of the Province and clothed those gentlemen with the authority of delegates. The petitions sent across the water could not be expected to have had any effect—on any public question of interest a cartload of them could be obtained without any result. One benefit that will accrue from Confederation is that the General Government will control the currency. I look upon the mode in which our Provincial currency has been managed as imprudent and selfish; a number of bankers, by combining, have controlled the currency completely. Instead of £140,000 in Province notes, we should have had half a million years ago afloat, and the condition of our finances would have been far better. Another advantage is the construction of the Intercolonial Railroad, and the extension of our other roads, which I believe we could not have without the union. In view of these questions I have felt that if my last hour had come and my opinion were asked, I would say: do not be afraid to venture on the great realities that will break forth on a combined people. Isolated, there is no safety; combined there is wisdom and security. Mr. Howe has been much referred to. I was sorry when he left us, and I can well remember receiving