

financial arrangement which was to give us 80 cents a head was based upon the revenues of 1863. Since that time our customs revenues alone has increased \$351,822—considerably more than the annual subsidy; and yet we are expected to be thankful when we are promised an additional \$60,000 a year—about one-third of the increase of the revenue for a single year, 1866, under our present low tariff.—The terms may seem better, but are they such as we were entitled to receive—such terms, as with a full knowledge of the facts, the delegates were bound to secure for the people they professed to represent? \$60,000 a year; what is it? By a single enactment the general government could levy a larger export duty on coal every year. The increased taxes from the advalorem duties alone of a Canadian tariff, 50 per cent above ours, will add nearly \$300,000 a year to our taxation. Talk of taxes! Our people are for the first time in their lives about to realize what taxation is under this precious scheme of confederation.

A great mistake was made in seeking to change the institutions of these Provinces, under which they have all grown to be free, happy and prosperous. They would not leave well enough alone,—and they must take the consequences of their folly in seeking to establish a new nation, which can only exist upon the forbearance of a powerful and exacting neighbor. We are told that the country is familiar with the question. Yes, with the question in the abstract. It has been discussed here from time to time, some favoring a Legislative and others a Federal Union, but no one having a clear and definite view of the subject. Mr. Howe, who I heartily wish was here to defend himself, has been charged with being the originator of Confederation. I deny the truth of that assertion, and challenge an investigation of that gentleman's speeches and writings for a single instance in which he advocated such a scheme as that now pressed upon our acceptance. My friend has written and said much on the subject of Union; he has discussed the subject in its various phases, but he raised objections to them all—to a Legislative Union, to a Federal Union, to union with the United States—and only gave in his adhesion to the larger and more comprehensive scheme known as the "Organization of the Empire." Mr. Howe never favored any scheme of Union that would have destroyed the autonomy of this Province, and certainly never would have been a party to any measure that would have handed over the revenues and resources of Nova Scotia to Canada, or any other country. The Provincial Secretary says that he (Prov. Secy.) held meetings in various parts of the country, where he lectured upon Union. And if he did, what then? He does not pretend to say that he advocated a Confederation scheme like the present, but like Mr. Howe, whom he appears to have a mania for imitating, he was in favor of Union of some sort, without any very clear or definite views upon the subject. But suppose Mr. Howe had written all his life long in favour of Union, or even in favour of Confederation, what then? We are here to decide for ourselves and for the people of this country, and we are bound to examine and see whether it is for their benefit or not to reject this or any other measure, but,

above all, to claim their right to be heard before any change is made.

The Pro Secy. referred to the suffrage question, and told us the late Government introduced a bill to disfranchise a large body of the electors. They did. But the difference between that case and the present is: they did not succeed in passing the measure into law, and going to the elections their action was condemned, and they paid the penalty. The people returned a majority in favor of universal suffrage—they rebuked the action of the late Government, but what chance have the electors of reversing the Confederation policy and bringing back their constitution, when the Bill before the Imperial Parliament becomes law? The hon. member knows that they have none, and that the cases are not parallel.

He has asked us to show a precedent for the course which we urge. It is not for him to ask that of us, but we demand of him where in the history of the world any such attempt has been made to deprive a people of their government and institutions against their will—without even the Parliament being allowed to review the measure. Such a policy may be tried with impunity in a province like Nova Scotia with its 350,000 people, but could it be safely tried in the Canadas with their two and a half millions? Could it be tried in England? Suppose any ministry in the mother country were to bring forward a measure for the annexation of the British Islands to Austria or any other any other kingdom—could it be done without a revolution? We are too weak to rebel if we had the disposition, but it is a fair principle that what could not be done constitutionally in England should not be done here. It is said that the resolution of 1861 introduced by Mr. Howe committed the late Government and every member of the house to the support of Union. That resolution merely declared that the subject of union had been frequently discussed, and that the time had come when it should be set at rest. That resolution speaks for itself—it bound no gentleman to support any particular form of union, or union at all; much less a scheme prepared three years afterwards at Quebec containing provisions which no one could have dreamed of in 1861. That resolution led to a conference in 1862 at which were present delegates from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and the whole Executive Council of Canada. I was one of the delegates, and was present when the question of colonial union was discussed. And what was the decision? This House had asked that the question should be "set at rest," and the answer they received was that it was premature even to discuss the question. The delegates considered it premature to consider the subject until the Intercolonial Railway had been built, and free trade between the Provinces established. That then is the answer to the argument drawn from the resolution of 1861 which, it should be remembered, was not even debated in this House. The Prov. Sec. spent nearly an hour in enlarging upon the rights and powers of Parliament. No one disputes the power of Parliament.—what we were discussing is not the power, but the sound and wise exercise of