

British America is divided, were able to devise a common scheme of Union. After the question was fully dealt with, a scheme was presented which, as whole, was accepted by the conference.

THE ADVANTAGES OF LEGISLATIVE UNION.

The result of that Conference, it will be now my duty to refer to, for let that scheme occupy what position it may at this hour, no one can hesitate to admit that the interests involved in it are of the most vital consequence. It becomes me as a member of the government of my country,—as a public man responsible to the House and the people for the views I entertain upon a question of this kind—that I should have an opportunity of explaining and vindicating as I can, the grounds which led me to concur as I did most heartily in the scheme proposed for the Union of British North America. I need not tell the House that a great deal of discussion has taken place in times past as to whether a legislative or federal union would be the best mode by which these Provinces could be united, and I believe that I will be able to show this House that whilst a Legislative Union was really not practically before us—for there were difficulties lying in its path such as to render its adoption impossible—yet the Union which was devised by the Quebec Conference, possessed all the advantages of both without the disadvantages that attended each separately. No person, who is acquainted with the character of Legislative Union, but knows, when it is proposed for a country with the area and extent of territory that British America possesses, its realization is attended with great difficulties if not with insuperable obstacles. No person, who is acquainted with what has taken place in the Imperial Parliament, but knows that great as that country has become under a Legislative Union, yet the difficulties connected with the Union are such as at this moment to be occupying the attention of the foremost statesmen of Great Britain. The difficulties in the way of a Legislative Union are that the Legislature has not only to be occupied with the discussion of the great and leading questions which touch the vital interests of every section of the country, but to give its attention largely to matters of merely local concern. At present, the Parliament is obliged to take up and consider from five to six hundred local bills. When we consider that this body of 600 men,—the most influential and important assemblage of statesmen in the world, are called upon to give their attention upon some five hundred bills, which are not of general but of purely local concern, you can imagine the difficulty of carrying on the legislation of such a country. It is not strange that under such circumstances the Parliament is obliged to sit eight out of twelve months in order to accomplish the legislation required at their hands. If a Legislative Union were devised for British North America the people occupying the different sections would not have the guarantee that they have under the scheme devised, that matters of a local character would occupy the attention of the local legisla-

tures, whilst those of a general nature would be entrusted to the General Legislature. Therefore the scheme that was devised gave the centralization and consolidation and unity that it was absolutely indispensable should be given. On the other hand, instead of having copied the defects of the federal constitution—instead of having the inherent weakness that must always attend a system where the local legislatures only impart certain powers to the government of the country—quite a different course was pursued, and it was decided to define the questions that should be reserved for the local legislatures, and those great subjects that should be entrusted to the general parliament. Therefore, whilst the unity and consolidation connected with Legislative Union was obtained on the one hand, due care and attention to the local matters interesting to each Province were provided for by the preservation of local parliaments, and these powers were so arranged as to prevent any conflict or struggle which might lead to any difficulty between the several sections.

OUR CONNECTION WITH GREAT BRITAIN STRENGTHENED.

Instead of looking to the Union of British North America as tending to weaken the bond of connection that binds us to the parent state, no one who reads the resolutions of the conference but must see that there was placed in the forefront the principle that that bond should be strengthened, and that we should be connected with the parent state by a more indissoluble tie than ever before existed. I need not tell the house that these results have been submitted to the attention of the Imperial Government, and the statesmen of England have looked upon them not as likely to separate these dependencies, but as the best means of uniting them more indissolubly to the crown. I need not state that the same bond which exists between Canada and England—between Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and England, was conceived, and that when the scheme contemplated that the Queen should place a Viceroy or Governor-General over these dependencies thus united, the surest guarantee was given that the great object was to preserve the bonds that connect us with the parent state. And that view has been accepted not only by the government but by the people and press of England, and by statesmen in every quarter of the globe.

LOCAL GOVERNORS.

A great deal of stress has been laid on the fact that whilst the Governor General should be appointed by the Crown, the connection between these Provinces and the British Government would be weakened, because it was proposed that the local governors should not be appointed as at present. Those who examine the subject will find very little on which to base that argument. Every person must see that it was important that the local governments in each province should be so united with the general government under the Governor-General as to ensure harmony and co-operation, and that it therefore became necessary that an altera-