

tance over the railways; the barrels are injured; water communication is infinitely preferable. It is only a matter of time that the road will be found of any particular advantage. What I fear is, that if you pass this measure in the main proposed you will convulse the country from one end to the other. All we require is to be allowed to manage our own affairs in our own way. I do not think that we can be better off than we are now under any circumstances. Why not then let well enough alone, and cease disturbing the country at what gentlemen say is a critical period of its history? The Quebec scheme is as good a scheme as any you can devise, but I don't want any at all. I know that my constituents are to a man opposed to the proposed Confederation, and I am determined to stand by them. I feel that they will look upon the present action with horror and alarm. My people, I say, would prefer Annexation to Confederation, but only let a thousand Fenians come among them, and the fellows would not be heard of. Let England or Canada be assailed, and two thirds of our young men will volunteer to take care of the country. But still we do not wish to be hurried into Confederation. We want the people to have a voice in the matter.

SPEECH OF THE HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL.

HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL said:—I have been labouring for some days past under a hoarseness, which is not at all pleasant, and I do not feel now in a condition to do justice to the important subject before the House; but as gentlemen appear indisposed to speak on the subject, I shall endeavour, without preparation, to give my thoughts as concisely as is possible. The question is one of such great magnitude that I feel I am hardly doing my duty in addressing the House under the circumstances I have stated. The present question is one which is fraught with most fruitful consequences to the people of this province, as well as of all British North America. We have thrown upon us a responsibility by the tide of events which we must assume, unless we are willing to fail in the duty we owe to the people. It will be for gentlemen, looking at the whole position calmly and dispassionately, to deal with the question as subjects of our beloved Queen, anxious to perpetuate the connection with the British Empire. All considerations of party politics should be laid aside, and no influences should prevail, except the desire to arrive at a conclusion that will benefit the people whose interests we have in charge. I contend that, as subjects of the Queen of England, as members of the province of Nova Scotia, we have duties now to discharge of a most onerous character. We have been accustomed from our childhood to take an interest in the great country from which we have sprung. We have drawn from that country the principles that lie at the foundation of all our institutions. We should look at the present question, not merely in the capacity of provincial representatives, but as subjects of the great empire of Great Britain. I hold this doctrine, and I believe it is a patriotic one, that we should consider in our deliberations that we are acting not only for the advantage of Nova Scotia but also in the interests of the great empire on which the sun is said never to set. I have

listened with some interest to the speech just delivered by the hon. member for Yarmouth (Mr. Powisland), and although I must condemn his disloyal sentiments, yet I feel he is at all events entitled to some credit for the candor with which he stated them. I can understand that hon. member coming forward and proclaiming to the House and country that the people of Yarmouth have no loyalty except what puts money into their pockets. We can understand that argument against the union of the Provinces, and need not therefore be surprised that nine-tenths of the people of that section are opposed to Confederation.—We therefore see plainly why the hon. gentleman is opposed to a union of British North America. We can understand gentlemen who argue this way, who prefer annexation with the "Stars and Stripes" to England's "Meteoric flag," but what are we to think of gentlemen who come forward and say that they are actuated by very different motives—that they wish to keep up the connection with the British Crown; they say they are loyal, but that if we confederate, we must be eventually annexed to the United States. That is an argument which requires some explanation before it can satisfy those who have studied the question of union and have come to the conclusion that a union of the Provinces is necessary to the continuance of their connection with Great Britain, and their only safety against annexation.

When the resolution was passed in this House, providing for a Conference to consider the question of a union of the Maritime Provinces, we all believed that a union with Canada was impracticable at that time—that she would not be moved by an appeal from these colonies—that any movement on our part would not influence her. That was the sole reason why Canada is not included in the resolution in question. We believed that union of the Maritime Provinces was alone practicable, and that it would lead to the larger Union. A delegation was sent to Charlottetown, but before it took place what was announced in all the newspapers? What was everywhere known and understood? What was the understanding of every man that went on that delegation? Why, that the delegates of the Maritime Provinces were to meet a delegation from Canada at Charlottetown in reference to a Union of British North America. Gentlemen, how busily occupied in opposing union, were aware what was to take place at that convention. I have no hesitation in saying that the fact was known to Mr. Howe, and publicly stated in his presence at the dinner given to the Canadian gentlemen, but who, in a number of articles, has been obstructing union for the last eighteen months—who has called those connected with the Quebec scheme "traitors"; thereby stigmatizing his own political friends and allies as well as those who have been opposed to him in public life. He has charged them with having sold and bartered away the rights of the people of the country, and when a gentleman under his own hand, makes such charges against others, he need not be surprised that they are thrown back against the individual who made them. That gentleman knew that the Delegates were to meet for the purpose stated. He did not wait to be asked to join that delegation, but personally solicited the appointment.