

let me say a few words to my honorable friend, the learned member for Colchester—generally termed the leader of the opposition. Certainly not the leader of the opposition on this question. And sometimes we put the query to ourselves, whether he should be recognized as the leader of the opposition at all? I do not say this offensively, but I feel that that hon. gentleman, on a question of such large importance as this, has ill discharged his duty to the gentlemen with whom he has long been associated, when he ignored the functions of the party that introduced responsible government into this country, and ventured to agree in Canada to adopt a scheme without reference to the people—contrary, as I believe, to the principles under which our government is formed. That hon. gentleman stated no opinion had been expressed against Union. But it must not be supposed in this case that silence gives consent. If the question of immediate union with Canada had been submitted to the house last winter, I believe it would not have been entertained at all. The sentiment of this country has not come up to union with Canada. It is true we have had delegates from time to time, and eminent leading men have proceeded to Canada and England authorized to discuss the question in connexion with other matters, but you never had any measure submitted. You never had the question of federal union. Union in any form never was brought up in a practical shape. But, says the learned gentleman, the public opinion of England, previous to 1857, was opposed to a union of these colonies. So it was. There was a party in England at that time who thought if these colonies were united they would become powerful and antagonistic to the mother country. I admit a different feeling has come over the British people in that respect. But let us look at the motive. England is governed largely by the mercantile interests; and the men of the Manchester school, looking at the enormous taxes imposed by Canada upon British manufactures, and that in 1862 a proposition to grant a considerable sum of money towards the maintenance of the militia was thrown out, naturally look favorably upon a confederation or any scheme which, in their opinion, would not only have the effect of reducing the duties upon manufactures, but of throwing the burthen of the defence of the provinces upon themselves. Such is the belief of the British people. Will they believe it now when the views of all parties are better known? When they perceive that the duties cannot be reduced under confederation? When they hear that the conference only proposed to give \$1,000,000 for defences? Will they believe it when they learn that, even in Canada, there is a large party—including, it is said, even some of the members of the government themselves—who are not much disposed to keep up the connection with the imperial government unless they guarantee a war loan. We have been told about allegiance and loyalty, but what do we find in the *Toronto Globe*, the organ of the hon. George Brown, a personal friend of my own. In his correspondence from Quebec, we are told that there is a large party in Canada in favor of annexation—a sentiment which has been repeated in the editorial columns of the same journal. And the apprehension was wide spread, that unless the imperial government bled freely, they will look for more intimate

relations with the neighboring States. That is said to be the feeling of a large party in Canada.

WHAT THEY SAY IN ENGLAND.

We have been referred to opinions expressed in England. Lord Derby, we are told, expressed a strong opinion on the Reciprocity Treaty, and alarm in consequence of the notice that was given of its repeal; but when we have a government in England, we do not look to the opposition for the sentiments of the people of that country. We look to the government as the gentlemen representing public opinion.—Lord Derby's observations, I may say, however, with regard to these colonies, were of the most friendly character—he was ready to defend these provinces at all hazards, and he blamed the government for their want of foresight; but I do not take his opinions as those of the people of England. Let me refer you to an authority equally as eminent as Mr. Foster, Right Hon. Mr. Fitzgerald, a distinguished member of the House of Commons who said:

"I differ widely from the hon. member for Radnorshire (Sir J. Walsh), who seemed to consider that the course lately taken by the American government in order to effect the termination of the convention relating to the limitation of the naval force of the two countries on the lakes was conceived, by the American government in a spirit of hostility to England, and that the termination of the reciprocity treaty marked a clear spirit of hostility to this country. I have never held such language, nor do I think it is justified. As to the limitation of the naval force on the lakes, the American government are perfectly justified in proposing it. What are the circumstances under which notice to terminate the convention is good? By a party of sympathizers making a descent from Canada, an American vessel was seized on one of the great lakes, it was only by accident that a second vessel was not seized; and the object might have been carried out for the liberation of a large number of Confederate prisoners on Johnson's island. Under such circumstances, seeing that there was nearly 2000 prisoners there—that an attack had been made on American property in American waters, I think the American government were justified in having recourse to this measure."

There is the justification, and I consider it ample. Suppose the position of affairs were reversed, and that we were American citizens, and vessels were to be fitted out from the ports of our enemy—would we not resent it, and if there was a treaty in existence which prevented us arming boats on the lakes, would we not give notice immediately of our intention to bring it to a termination. I shall now produce a much higher authority—no one else than Mr. Cardwell himself, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Provincial Secretary, on a previous evening, spoke in the tone of the alarmist, as did also this afternoon, my hon. friend from Colchester—held out the bug bear of the notices given for the termination of the Reciprocity Treaty—for the abrogation of the treaty in reference to gunboats on the lakes, and for bringing the labours of the Fishery Commissioner to an end. All these facts were mentioned with the usual great emphasis of that hon. gentleman as illustrations of the spirit of hostility that influences the United States in respect to these provinces. Now I do not think that gentleman, as a Minister of the Crown in this country, was warranted in indulging in that strain. My hon. friend from Colchester who does not bear the responsibilities of government, might say this, but it did not become the Provincial Secre-