

ductive of good, I will share in it. If on the other hand, it is productive of evil, I shall be free from the responsibility of bringing it upon the country. I ask hon. members whether they are prepared to accept the Quebec Scheme. I believe a large majority of the people of the country are decidedly opposed to that Scheme, but I believe as firmly as I believe I live that if power is given to Delegates to act in conjunction with Delegates from the other Provinces, no material alterations will be made in the Scheme. It is a most extraordinary thing that the Government, in moving a resolution like this, will not condescend to inform the country of the basis upon which they intend to proceed. I believe the reason is because they know the people of the country are opposed to the Quebec Scheme. This question will affect this country for all time to come, and it is important that hon. members should bring their minds to consider this question free from prejudice, and not support a resolution for the mere purpose of victory. I ask every hon. member here if it was not the duty of the Government to give some information of what they intend to do? Is it enough to state that the Delegates will endeavor to obtain better terms if they can? Who will be the Delegates that are to be clothed with this tremendous power to settle and determine for the people of this country what their constitution shall be for all time to come? Where, in the history of a free country, can you find that such powers have been given to any individuals to determine a Scheme of Union so important and so tremendous in its consequences as this must be to the people of this country, without any reference to the Legislature or people? Is it not right that any Scheme of Union which may be agreed upon in England should be submitted to the House again for their approval? Are you prepared to clothe these Delegates with power to go there and fix your destinies for ever? These men are to proceed to England and determine upon a Scheme of Union to be carried out and consummated by an Act of the Imperial Parliament. I may be entirely in error, and my judgment may be erroneous, but it does seem to me to be but reasonable that the people of this country should have some voice in the matter, because it has not been said that the people of the country have affirmed the Quebec Scheme. I believe a large portion of the country are opposed to the Scheme in all its provisions and features. They have affirmed the principle of Union without reference to the Quebec Scheme. If then Delegates go home to England and act in conjunction with Delegates from the other Provinces, is it not

right that the people of this Province, who are so seriously to be affected by it, should have some voice as to whether the Scheme they had agreed upon was good or bad? Should they not have a right to pass judgment upon it? Therefore the Government have failed in the way in which they have put the matter before the House. I do not think they have treated the House and people right. The Attorney General does not say whether he intends to have this matter referred to the people, or whether he intends to have those Delegates go to England and there act with other Delegates in forming a Scheme of Union which is to be imposed upon us by an Act of Imperial Parliament. (Hon. Mr. Fisher. That is the way it is to be done.) That then is the power which is proposed to be given to the Delegates. I am not going to discuss the way in which the Government obtained power, but I believe it was by unfair means. I think the Governor did injustice to his late Council and to the country in consulting with members of the Opposition. When members of the Government went to the Government House to consult him, he left them and consulted a member of the Opposition, who was one of the most determined opponents of the Government. These are the means by which the present Government obtained power, and the people have affirmed their position. They have declared against me and my late colleagues; and we await future developments to show whether we were right or wrong. That the late Government were not consulted by the Governor is a fact admitted on all sides, but he has been sustained because the people were in a state of political intoxication; but when sober reason comes to exercise its sway this decision will be reversed, but in the meantime our constitution is gone. Hon. members may treat it with levity, and think it a matter of little importance whether a man be anti-Confederate or Confederate, they ought not to think so lightly of it; every member ought to be impressed with the solemnity of this occasion, because it is a matter of infinite importance. If it were a matter affecting the country for but ten or twenty years, we might treat it with comparative indifference, but it is binding upon us for ever. It is the imperative duty of every man who has a sense of his responsibility to consider this matter seriously, and not lose himself to this or that man when his country is in danger. If any men are animated by a desire for self-aggrandizement in this matter, let me apply to them the language of the poet—"Is there not some chosen curse, some hidden thunder stirs heaven red with uncommon wrath, to blight the man who owes his greatness to his country's ruin." It has flashed across

my mind that the judgment of some of these men may be blinded by the prospect of a large arena where their ambition may be gratified. I see in this resolution some protection; there is still a hope left. In Nova Scotia the people have never passed upon this question. If Confederation should be carried and imposed upon the people of that Province without their being appealed to, a flagrant outrage will have been perpetrated upon them. I have more confidence in the British Government and the House of Commons than to believe any Act of Union can be passed without the people of Nova Scotia being appealed to. I have been told by Joseph Howe, who is admitted to be the greatest statesman in the whole of America, that he saw the elements of discord in this Union, and he would not support it if they gave him the Governorship of India. He has fought the battles of the people and obtained for them the recognition of all their rights under the constitution under which they live. He has moved Nova Scotia from its centre to its circumference. It has been promulgated throughout the country that Joseph Howe is imbecile or crazy. I have heard speeches about his mental imbecility, but I should like to hear them make one like I heard him make twelve months ago at Detroit. Then he was considered the pride of British America, but now, because he would not drop into those Confederation grooves, he is anathematized, abused, and contumely heaped upon his head. It seems the custom to abuse those who dare to raise their voice in favor of the institutions of their country. I have been most fearfully abused throughout this contest, because I have had the hardihood to stand up to preserve inviolate the institutions of the country. The Governor has charged me, and he has charged his late Council, with taking a paper from the file. This was an unwarrantable charge, for we had no access to the Council Chamber. He has put it forward over this country that we were guilty of felony, because he says we abstracted from the files of the Council a paper which he says ought to have been there. That charge was totally unfounded. Instead of accepting our resignation in the usual manner by asking us to retain office until our successors were appointed, he accepted them absolutely, and we ceased to be Executive Councillors. The paper was our paper, and it never was in our Executive Council Chamber. The Governor has charged me with telling untruths, and these, with other slanders, have gone forth to the country. He has appealed to his high name and lineage. He says the name of Gordon was ever a guarantee for truth. When a man is