

satisfied, and I think with very good reason, for they were forced into the Union against their will; and if justice is done to that colony I think that before many months we shall see a great change in the constitution of the Dominion. If Nova Scotia succeeds in getting out of Confederation, New Brunswick will very likely follow, for she consented to enter the Union with the understanding that Nova Scotia was also to be a part of the Dominion. It has not worked so well as its promoters thought it would, and I think we may be satisfied that we are free from it.

Hon. Mr. McADAM.—There is scarcely an incident, Mr. Chairman, which passes before the eyes of a wise man which does not teach him a lesson, and I think we have learned a lesson from what has transpired in the neighboring provinces. I think we acted the wise part in refraining from joining the Union until we found out what effect Confederation would have on the other provinces. It is a satisfaction also to know that the most ardent unionist in this Island would not consent to join the Union without appealing to the people and obtaining their consent. So soon as it appears that a Union will be advantageous to us, it will be soon enough for us to think seriously of joining it. We have taken the safe course, and we are not affected with that dissatisfaction which prevails in the other colonies. They acted the part of a child springing to grasp something which appeared bright, but the nature of which it did not understand. I hope, however, that the results will not be so disastrous to them as some persons anticipated. I cannot agree with my hon. friend the Attorney General that New Brunswick can free herself from the Union—for she entered it of her own accord, and she must lie on the bed which she made for herself.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON.—I think, Mr. Chairman, that no hon. member can think with indifference of the subject before the committee. It is true that the New Brunswickers entered the union with too great haste, and the fact that they are now dissatisfied with their position goes to confirm what you, Sir, and others have so often expressed as their convictions, that nothing would justify us in entertaining the question while we could avoid it. But while the people of New Brunswick entered the union those of Nova Scotia were dragged into it by a conspiracy, a conspiracy against the best interests of the whole colony, and a gross abuse to the constitutional power put into the hands of the people's representatives for a very different purpose. Now, Sir, I feel no pleasure at any confusion or disturbance in any portion of the North American Provinces, for whatever tends to disturb any portion, more or less tends to disturb the whole, and we being so closely connected with the rest must sensibly feel the effects of any jarring elements at work within them. But, Sir, it is easy to contrast the first movements of the Dominion machinery with the glorious state of things which the admirers of union would fain have made us believe would be the result. I think that whatever may be said of the future prospects of the Dominion, every person who takes a fair survey of the question will come to the conclusion that for the present, at least, it will be better for Prince Edward Island to retain her isolated position.

Hon. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT.—About the time the Dominion Government was being formed, an offer of \$200,000 was made to this Island, and it was thought

by a great many that this would be sufficient to induce the people to join the Confederation, that it would be enough to buy out the proprietors' claims. But it should be remembered that that was an offer of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Delegates, and was not confirmed by the Canadians, and if the people of this Island had joined the Union it is very doubtful if these promises would have been fulfilled. I believe the people of this Island are satisfied that they are better off in their present position than they would be if connected with Canada even had they obtained the \$200,000. There was no guarantee that the Dominion Government would pass a compulsory measure to settle the land question, and from the Dispatch from the Colonial Minister now before us, we may infer that such a measure would not be sanctioned by the British Government. If the proprietors were unwilling to sell, the Dominion Government although they had offered the \$200,000, would not be called upon to pay it. If ever this Island does enter Confederation it will be when matters are going on more smoothly than at present.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—I wish, Mr. Chairman, to say a few words on this subject, chiefly to express my sympathy with the people of Nova Scotia who have been dragged into the Union against their wishes. As far as my knowledge goes, I believe the people of this Island are unwilling to join the Union on any terms. The \$200,000 would nothing like compensate us for the disadvantages to which we would be subjected by entering Confederation. I believe that if the grievances connected with the land tenure were far worse than they are, the people would submit to them rather than join themselves to Canada. We may, however, express our regret that the people of Nova Scotia have been forced into a union which they did not desire. There is a strong link connecting us with the people of Nova Scotia, and it is lamentable to contemplate the position they are in at present; but I have no doubt but that they will yet be allowed to secede from the Dominion, and again assume the proud position they formerly occupied.

Mr. McNEILL.—It is true, Mr. Chairman, that the people of the lower provinces entered the union without sufficiently considering the subject, and numbers of the people of this Island thought it would be a benefit. It was a new thing which the people did not understand; we had suffered a good deal from the rent system, and some were under the impression that Confederation might be a panacea for that evil. About the time it was first brought to our notice, however, a great many public meetings were held through the country, (for what purpose it is not necessary now to state,) but this matter, among others, was thoroughly discussed. The people of this Island when they take a matter into consideration are quite capable of judging for themselves, and they declared against Confederation for this reason, that if they joined it instead of having the management of their own affairs, they would be taxed by a Parliament over which they would have no control, and these taxes would be appropriated without their consent. There was another reason also, they watched the proceedings of the delegates who met at Quebec, and they found there was very little sympathy or respect for Prince Edward Island. Even the talented T. D'Arty McGee, whose untimely death we have been lately deploring, could not refrain from indulging in a little barbed wire on our Island by saying that they would send one of their