

reached the ears or the hearts of the members composing that branch of the Imperial Legislature. It passed the House of Lords with more facility than a bill imposing a tax on dogs would have done. It was hurried through in indecent and disgraceful haste, and sent to the House of Commons. How was it received there? I cannot imagine how it should have met with any other reception than it did when I read the observations of members of that house—observations which must have proceeded from information coming from a quarter from which sounder information should have been supplied. It was there stated by prominent members that this matter had been before the people just previous to the last election; that the Premier had gone to every hustings, and at every polling booth in the Province had preached on the question of Union. It was on information such as that that the enlightened House of Commons proceeded and I need scarcely ask members whether that information was true or false. Is there a member of this house or a man in the country who will venture to say that previous to the last election—at the time when the canvass was taking place—this question was presented to the people, or that on any hustings it was even mentioned. And if not, I care not whether it had been at any previous time. In the course of my professional training I have learned this principle: that the last will which a man makes is that which must be recognized. Whatever his previous dispositions may have been, they are cancelled and annulled by his subsequent wishes. When, therefore, at the last election, the matter was altogether ignored I am right in saying that it was not before the people, and that they did not then express their views upon it. But let me be more particular. I have in my hand a copy of the *London Times*, an authority which will be especially acceptable to members of government, and it contains the debate on this question. This report contains so many amusing pieces of misinformation that I must trouble the house with a few extracts. Mr. Watkins who, for many good reasons, but none of them referable to the interests of Nova Scotia, took a deep interest in the proceedings and action of the delegation is reported to have said in reference to this Province: "There was a general election in 1863, and the Prime Minister went through the country preaching this Confederation of the provinces. It was brought under the notice of the electors at every polling booth, and at every hustings the issue was distinctly raised." I am willing to give the leader of the government credit for great versatility of talent, but I never knew that he had the qualifications of a preacher, unless it be true which I do not assert, that a great sinner is likely to be most successful in converting men from sin. If I read on further it would be still more apparent that the Parliament of England has been grossly deceived at a time when there were present about them men who ought to have taken care that the subject should be looked into most carefully. I find also that the debate embodied the idea that this measure was a treaty of peace between these Provinces. I am rather disposed to view it as a declaration of war—war on the rights, the feelings, the interests and the liberties of the people of this country. Those gen-

tle men who, since the last session, have visited their constituencies must be well satisfied of that opposition for no man with open eyes and ears could have travelled through the rural districts without seeing and hearing that the measure was obnoxious to the feelings of the people. If it were a measure good instead of bad, if it had merits instead of demerits without number, I conceive that the people who are to be affected by its operation should be heard upon it in a constitutional manner at the polls, and until they are so heard you may pass this Act of Parliament, calling it an Imperial Act if you will, but it will be a blank piece of paper until the hearts and sympathies of the people rally round it to give it effect. By the amendment which I have submitted we ask to obtain for the people the liberty to speak on the subject, and why should they not speak. According to the constitution of this house the day is not far distant when under any circumstances the House would be dissolved,—its existence can last but for a few weeks and why this haste? I must say that we have approached a crisis of a momentous character in our history. This Province until a recent period was a loyal and happy Colony, having every reason to be loyal, every reason to be happy until this unfortunate and unhappy measure was brought in and cast among us. Shall I be told that loyalty exists now in the same richness among us as it once and recently did? Mr. Speaker, I strenuously opposed the measure last Session on the ground that the course about to be taken would endanger the allegiance and undermine the loyalty of the people and since that time I have seen that that result is but too probable. We are told by members of the Imperial Parliament that it is desirable we should be separated from the British Empire and further we are told that it is not alone for the interests of Nova Scotia that the scheme has been projected—that there are reasons making it desirable that we should be connected with a large country. To secure Canada from foreign invasion the right of Nova Scotians are to be interfered with and trampled upon. I conceive that Nova Scotia has at least as just a claim to the protection of England as Canada. Nova Scotia has been truly loyal, and in every hour of danger she has exhibited a disposition to the uttermost extent of her resources to stand by and maintain the honor and integrity of the Empire. I conceive that the transactions of the past few months are exhibiting a poor return for that loyalty and that allegiance. The loyalty which I desire to see is the loyalty of the heart, not the loyalty pampered and fed and fattened by the contents of the treasury. The loyalty of the heart, springing from just and honorable motives—that is the loyalty which is desirable, and anything else is unworthy of the name. In this amendment we beg to approach His Excellency with the respectable submission that this is a most important crisis in our history. The men who best know the country feel this as they travel through its length and breadth. Pass this act without reference to the people whose rights are to be affected, and do you make them its friends? Do you not rather create in them feelings precisely the reverse? Do you not make them enemies and disloyal? Those who are in opposition have been denounced as disloyal, but