

bial. If there is a single argument that will more than another touch the hearts of our loyal population, it is that the enemies of British power everywhere are hostile to this movement, and the fact should cause many of us to hesitate and enquire what is our true position? If we have any regard for our present happy condition, or any desire to continue our connection with Great Britain, it behooves us to set our house in order, and to see that we are not, in more ways than one, in the words of the *New York Herald* "gravitating towards annexation." No one can doubt the patriotism of the people of Nova Scotia, and if a hostile raid were made upon any portion of our country, the invaders would meet with a reception they would not soon forget. But who does not know that the favor and protection of Great Britain would be to us a source of greater security than maintaining a standing army of 100,000 men?—With the power of the greatest Empire under the sun at our backs, we could present a fearless front to all the world. If it were desirable for no other cause than these Provinces should be consolidated—than that we would thereby disappoint the enemies of our country, it should be to this fact by that step we would secure the protection of the mother country—when she only asks from us an act of just filial obedience to induce her to stretch forth her powerful arm to guard our property and rights—this ought certainly to be sufficient. I say, therefore, in view of these facts—in view of the dangers which have developed themselves within the last few months, if we can obtain an equitable union, it is the duty of every man who desires to uphold British connexion—who is opposed to annexation—who has no sympathy with Fenians, and who does not wish to be consigned to the tender mercies of the lawless gang, to promote such an union of those provinces.

Now sir, holding the opinions I do in reference to this great question—advocating the principle of Union and opposing the Quebec Resolutions, I have been asked by the press of this country, and I admit not unfairly asked, to define my position. I have been asked to justify my conduct in opposing a scheme embodying a principle to which I am committed, without offering any other means of attaining the end I profess to have in view. Well, sir, I am here to-day to define my position, and to answer the other objections urged against me. I am also here to make an important enquiry of the Government. As to my position, I am in favor of an Union—a Federal Union of these Provinces. I believe such a Union best suited to the exigencies of our situation. If a Legislative Union were practicable I would prefer adopting the Federal principle in forming an union of British America. Among the admirable speeches delivered some years ago, in this House, on this subject, that of the present Chief Justice, in which that able lawyer and shrewd politician contended that a Federal Union was best suited to our circumstances, appeared to me the most statesmanlike and sound. Accepting, then, as I do, the principle of a Federal Union, I desire to ask the Government if there is no common ground on which the supporters of the Quebec scheme—abandoning that scheme—can meet the friends of an Union on more advantageous terms, and arrange the details of a measure that will be just and satisfactory to the people? I think there is a common ground,—a ground on which I am willing to take my stand regardless of who follows me. If the Government will publicly abandon the Quebec scheme, and introduce a resolution in favor of a Federal Union of British America—leaving the details of the measure to the arbitration of the Imperial Government, properly advised by delegates from all the Provinces, I promise them my cordial support. This would be commencing rightly. By getting the endorsement of the Legislature, in the outset, of the principle of Union, and its authority to enter on the settlement of the details of a scheme, the friends of the measure would occupy a very different position from that occupied by the delegates to the Quebec Conference, who went to Canada, in 1864, without any authority from Parliament. No small amount of opposition was at that time excited against confederation from this cause. It had much weight with myself

and many others, who looked upon the action of the delegates as an improper usurpation of power. Another conference on this side of the water has been suggested in certain quarters, but if we really desire a practical result, it cannot be entertained. To reopen negotiations here at the present time would be only to retard Union for some years to come. Besides I believe the most certain means of obtaining justice for the Maritime Provinces, would be to leave the settlement of details to the Imperial Government. I ask is there a tribunal in the world to which Nova Scotia might more confidently appeal for justice than to that august and impartial body? Its integrity—its wisdom—its intelligence are beyond dispute. I say that if there be a tribunal, where might will not prevail against right, it is the one I indicate. If we can get justice any where we will get it from that tribunal, and I ask does any Nova Scotian desire more than justice? This subject has engaged the attention of the public men of Great Britain. It is well known in that country that the difficulties in the way of union are principally with the Maritime Provinces, and if we throw ourselves confidently on the justice of the British Government, I believe we will receive even a partial arbitration of our rights. I know of no means by which we can more effectually conciliate the affections and secure the favorable consideration of the Queen's Government than by thus proving our confidence in its justice, and our anxiety to meet its wishes. I therefore ask the leader of the Government, and through him the advocates of the Quebec scheme, whether they are so wedded to that scheme as to be unable to entertain the proposition I, as a friend of Colonial Union, now frankly make?

I will not deny that the extraordinary reaction that has taken place in New Brunswick in regard to Union, and the admitted partiality of a large majority of the people of Nova Scotia for the abstract principle, coupled with the firm but constitutional pressure of the Imperial authorities, afford grounds to apprehend that before very long even the Quebec Resolutions may be carried in the Maritime Provinces. The object of my present movement is—and I fearlessly avow it—to defeat the Quebec scheme. Before it is too late—before we are borne down by the powerful influences against which we are now contending—while yet we have a formidable army in the field—while our opponents respect our strength and hesitate at an engagement—is it not wise to seek the most advantageous terms of compromise? Men of extreme views—men who desire to make this great subject a stalking horse on which to ride into office—in short, individuals "with other ends to serve," may condemn the course I have taken, but no one values the censure or approval of such men. I shall lose nothing in severing my connection with them, while I feel my conduct will be generally sustained by the intelligent portion of my countrymen. But I do confess that this step may sever me politically and personally from a few gentlemen, sincere in their opposition to all union—whom I respect, and whose friendship I value. I shall regret it, but must frankly say, I desire to maintain no connexion, I am prepared to throw away any friendship, that can only be preserved at the sacrifice of my convictions. If I have been marked for anything while I have been in this Assembly, it has been for independence of action, and fearlessness in the expression of my thoughts. I have never acknowledged allegiance to any leader or party in this House. I have never attended a party caucus in my life. Among the gentlemen I address, no one within the past two years has come more frequently into keen collision here and elsewhere with the occupants of the Treasury Benches than myself. I am certainly indebted to these gentlemen for no favours, and I can point to more than one act of personal and political injustice received at their hands. But, sir, I would be unworthy of my position in this Legislature, if I could allow considerations of this nature on one side or the other to controul my action in the presence of a question of the highest magnitude. I will not deny that I have some ambition as a public man, but my highest ambition will be gratified, if I can contribute an humble stone to the edifice of Colonial Union. Before, however, I can yield any assistance to the builders, the model of the proposed structure must