

union movement, myself, but I got tired of it, and tendered my resignation last year.

Hon. Col. CBAT. It was not received through the proper authority.

Mr. McLENNAN. Well, I never was decided that such was the case. I shall not detain the Committee any longer. I have listened to long speeches here, but I often think they are intended for electoraneous dogdom, but it is not so with me. I believe my constituency understand my views, and I will abide by the consequences. I do not see why any hon. member should object to the amendment; nor do I see why we should say that no Scheme of Union that could be propounded would be a benefit to the Island. Circumstances alter cases, and circumstances have changed since last year. Then we had a flourishing trade with the United States, but now it is cut off. I would not bind myself or my children to pursue any particular line of conduct. With these few remarks I will support the amendment.

Mr. BRECKEN. I did say that union would strengthen British America, and I am of the same opinion still; but as the Quebec Conference, due regard was not paid to the interests of this Island. I have no respect for the man who would advocate or condemn this Scheme for the purpose of popularity. Perhaps the advocates of Union occupy a more honorable position in this House than those who oppose it; but I would not advocate it for that reason. I do not altogether agree with the wording of the Resolution; but I would not entertain the question at all unless there was a prospect of getting the terms changed. I give the hon. member (Mr. Whelan) credit for the ingenious way in which he has worded the amendment. It admits the principle of Confederation, and the terms were said, by the Colonial Secretary, to be just and liberal to Prince Edward Island. I presume the hon. member did not refer to the Quebec Scheme, though I think the amendment has some connection with it. And is there any prospect of a change being made so that the interests of this Colony will be protected? I do not want to see a Union at the expense of the people of this Island; and I believe the men who propounded that scheme did not know anything about the local circumstances of this Island. I have not thrown out any improper insinuations. I would accord to every man the same respect as I would claim for myself. But I believe it is mere delusion to talk about the Quebec Scheme. Let the Canadians show the people of Prince Edward Island that, while they pay due regard to the broad principle of Union, they will give us a chance to live—that our peculiar wants and circumstances will be properly looked after—and not say to us, "you must take any particular scheme of Union," when they do not know anything about our circumstances.

Mr. SINCLAIR. The hon. member from Summerside (Mr. Macdonald) will not vote for the Resolutions of the hon. the leader of the Government, because they would bind us for all time to come; but that is only a matter of opinion.

The next House may pass very different Resolutions. I do not see how any hon. member can vote for the amendment; for it is certainly a strange Resolution. It admits that Confederation would be for the benefit of the Islands, and yet says it is unwise to press it upon the attention of the people, because it would create unnecessary apprehensions in their minds. The meaning I take out of it, that it is better to let the thing slide on—to let Delegates be appointed and sent to Kingston—to let a Scheme be proposed and carried into effect, and the people allowed

to pass an opinion on it as a general question afterwards. The Resolution says:—And this House believes that a plan of Confederation might be so framed as not to involve the sacrifice of any material interests on the part of any Island; but, inasmuch as the people of Prince Edward Island do not appear to be prepared to regard with any favor the project of Confederation, it is unwise to press it upon public attention, as its disposition is only calculated to produce excitement and apprehension without reasonable cause. What is the meaning of this? If it is not that the people of Prince Edward Island are not capable of forming an opinion, and, therefore, it is better to pass a Resolution to allow the British Government to take action, and then it will be time enough to press it upon public attention, I agree with the hon. member from Murray Harbour (Mr. Duncan) inasmuch as I do not see how we could vote for that Resolution, and refuse to appoint a Delegation. The hon. member from Summerside (Mr. Macdonald) said that if the British Government was determined to upbraid the Colonies, it was little matter whether he supported the Resolution or not—that it would be as well to drop the subject and leave it alone.

Mr. McLENNAN. I did not say that it would be as well to drop the subject and leave it alone.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I understood the hon. member to say that it would be as well to take no action on it. The British Government has certainly expressed a desire that the Colonies would unite, but we are not told that we are to be forced into a Union. The Colonial Minister, in his Dispatch, expresses an earnest desire for the consolidation of the British Provinces in one Government. In regard to Colonial defenses, I would be willing that the views of the British Government should be urged upon the Colonies with all just authority. While I believe we are willing to allow that—for I consider it to be our duty to give all due consideration to the opinion of the British Government in things of that kind—yet, sir, I am of opinion that we owe a higher duty to our country and to our children—the duty to preserve the inalienable right of self-government. Self preservation is the first law of nature, and it will hold good with regard to nations and colonies, as well as individuals. We are willing to contribute of our means, but not to give up our liberties, which our fathers have obtained for us. Though we are a small Colony and unable to offer any formidable resistance, that is no reason that we should voluntarily surrender a Constitution with which we are satisfied. We are prepared to do everything in our power, within the bounds of reason, to maintain our connection with the British Empire. We have a liberty to tax ourselves, and we are prepared to do our part; therefore, I do not think the British Government will ever attempt to create us into a Union against the wishes of the people, and which we believe would be prejudicial to our interests. It is useless for us to go into the details of the Scheme or to point out all the disadvantages to the Island of a Union with Canada. It is admitted by nearly all, even those in favor of a Union, that it would not be an advantage to the Island to enter the Union on the basis of the Quebec Scheme; and, for my part, I do not expect to get better terms, though, even if we could, we are an exception to the other Colonies, and a basis of Union which would be suitable and advantageous to them would not be so to us. I might point out objections which I have to the form of the Constitution, but I do not intend to go minutely into the merits or demerits of the Quebec Scheme. It is a conglomerate Constitution which I do not think would be so well received, sanctioned by the people of British North America.