

final decision to the Colonial office. We know that the Canadian element is predominant there, and these Maritime Provinces, however largely represented, would have little influence. The scheme that would come back would be substantially that of Quebec. I could have understood the hon. member had he proposed—and the proposal may be in harmony with my own views—a Convention of all the Provinces, called with the sanction of the Crown, in British North America. Such a Convention would consider the whole question, and come to an agreement, which could then be submitted to the people. If he had proposed some such scheme as that, I could have understood the hon. member; but to take the whole question from this House is what can never be agreed to by the people. I do not misinterpret the feeling of this country when I say that there is a universal feeling against any union with Canada. I do not say that this feeling is wise,—there may be a good deal of prejudice mixed up with it; but to follow the course proposed would be to destroy all hopes of unity. I am surprised at the motion of the hon. member, but I apprehend the result. The Government are only too glad to see a way of getting out of their present difficulties. However, I know if there is a lack of patriotism and intelligence in this House, it is not the case elsewhere. Feeling that, I do not hesitate to say this: A Union of these Provinces, consummated in this way, contrary to the wishes of the people, will not be worth the paper upon which it is recorded.

Mr. MACDONNELL said,—I would not, Mr. Speaker, undertake the task of addressing the House upon this occasion and without more preparation upon so important a subject, were it not for the sentiments which have just fallen from the Hon. Prov. Secretary. Neither do I do so without a full conviction of the responsibility I assume in the course I intend to pursue. I felt happy, Sir, to observe the position taken by the hon. leader of the Government, and I trust that this position will be approved of and endorsed by his hon. colleagues, and by those associated with him at the Quebec conference. The hon. gentleman has at length shown a disposition to abandon that pet scheme of Union, which, for such a length of time he and his friends appeared determined to fasten upon the people,—a scheme, in my opinion, as obnoxious and distasteful to the country, as it would prove injurious to its best interests. I rejoice to find the spirit in which the enquiry of the hon. member for Richmond has been met, and I feel I would be wanting in the performance of duty, if I did not avail myself of this, the first opportunity of expressing my satisfaction.

The question before us, I need not say, is one which demands mature and deliberate consideration, and should not be determined in a day; but it is now before this house for the second time, and since it was first brought under our consideration it has engaged the attention of our press, wherein it has been canvassed in all its features. It has been debated at length in this Legislature and on the public platform. And it has brought our ablest and leading minds into desirable contact in its discussion. Taking the results of its agitation in these different arenas together, with a glance at the

events which have transpired within the last year, and which are daily being enacted under our view, there is but one conclusion that can be arrived at by every honest man—by the admirer of British institutions, and that is, that *Union we must have*. This is a fact which is admitted almost on every hand—by the opponents of the Quebec scheme as well as its supporters. I was indeed surprised when I saw the course taken by the hon. member for East Halifax, who has just set down. When I saw that hon. gentleman rise to address the house, I expected it was to approve of the proposition made by the hon. member for Richmond, and which was so satisfactorily met by the leader of the Government.

How could I expect differently, when I read the paper which I hold in my hand? Can that hon. gentleman pretend to deceive this House as to his own opinion on the subject? How dare he say that he "will not inform the House whether he is for Union in the abstract or not? He must first deny his connection with one of the leading organs of opposition to the Quebec scheme, before he can ask this house to entertain a doubt as to his real position. Let me read an extract from the editorial column of the *Morning Chronicle* of the 24th of January last, of which that gentleman is Editor:

"And what then? Are we indifferent to the future of British America? Have we arrived at the conclusion that nothing should be done?—that we can remain forever in our present condition? On the contrary, while we claim that these Colonies—at all events the Maritime Provinces—never can be bettered by any change in their political situation, we feel that they cannot, in the very nature of things, always continue as they are. They may, it is true, go on for years and enjoy their present prosperity, but after all the time must come when they will be required to form new relations, whether with each other and the mother country will largely depend upon the exercise of great tact, wisdom, and forethought on the part both of British and Colonial statesmen."

"But it is because we feel that we must sooner or later make our choice between the mother country and the United States, that we desire to see this question of Colonial Union, now that it is fresh in the minds of the people, set at rest."

This journal then, sir, the leading one of this Province in opposition to the Quebec scheme—the organ of the hon. leader of anti-Confederation in this country—is, as you see, not only a strong advocate of union, but urges that the question be immediately, while fresh on the minds of the people, set at rest, and recommends the means for doing so. If, then, these are the sentiments and opinions of the great leader of anti-Confederation, are we not to assume, that his followers entertain the same opinion, but like their leader, have an object—yes, too apparent an object in offering a factious opposition. The union of these Provinces is desired because it is a necessity. Considering the present happy, peaceful and prosperous state of this Province I should feel happy indeed did this necessity not exist; but while circumstances do exist which to every sensible man leaves no room to deny this necessity, we in the position of the representatives of the people, holding the destiny of our common country in our hands, are bound by the highest duty we owe to the people of this Province to set this question at rest immediately, to use the words of the great leader of the anti-Confederate party. These circumstances are to well known to every gentleman