THE EXAMINER:

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"This is true Liberty, when Freeborn Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free."---Euripides.

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OBSERVATIONS UPON THE PROPOSED UNION OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES,

BEING A PAPER READ BEFORE

THE CHARLOTTETOWN LITERARY AND DEBATING SOCIETY,

BY THE HON. W. H. POPE, COL. SECRETARY

3rd February, 1865.

At the request of your Association, communicated to me by your Secretary, a few days since, I appear here, this evening, for the purpose of placing before you my views and opinions upon the question of the propised Union of the British North American Colonies, upon the basis of the Resolutions adopted at the Conference held at Quebec on October last.

I acceded to your request with pleasure, assured that an opportunity would here be afforded me of advancing, at least, a few of the arguments which might be adduced in favor of the great proposed Inter-colonial Union, and of having the soundness and force of my arguments tested by an assembly such as I see before me. I valued your invitation as a compliment to myself personally, and also as an evidence of willingness on the part of a Literary Society to discuss a question which I almost feared was deemed, by the citizens of Charlottetown, unworthy of serious consideration. Permit me to say that I attach much importance to the conclusions at which, after debating the subject, your Association will arrive. I do so, because I believe that your object will be to ascertain the TRUTH.

The subject which I am about to bring under your notice is one of vast importance, and is worthy of your most serious and attentive consideration.

Time will not admit of my entering upon a full exposition of the Report of the Conference. I shall, therefore, with a few digressions, confine myself to the enquiry, what would be our position FINANCIALLY, under the Confederation, and to a few observations upon the questions of "Defence" and "Representation in the Federal Legislature."

THE QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The 6th section of the Report of the Quebec Conference reads as follows:

"6. There shall be a general Legislature or Parliament for the Federated Provinces, composed of a Legislative Council and a House of Commons."

The 7th section provides that:

"7. For the purpose of forming the Legislative Council, the Federated Provinces shall be considered as consisting of three divisions: 1st, Upper Canada; 2nd, Lower Canada; 3rd, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; each division with an equal representation in the Legislative Council."

The 8th section declares that:

"8. Upper Canada shall be represented in the Legislative Council by 24 members, Lower Canada by 24 members, and the three Maritime Provinces by 24 members; of which Nova Scotia shall have ten, New Brunswick ten, and Prince Edward Island four members."

REPRESENTATION IN THE FEDERAL HOUSE OF COMMONS, AND THE METHOD OF RE ADJUSTMENT EVERY TEN YEARS.

These matters are provided for by sections 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 of the Report, which are as follow:

17. The basis of Representation in the House of Commons, shall be Population, as determined by the Official Census every ten years; and the number of Members at first shall be 194, distributed as follows:

Upper Canada	82
Lower Canada	65
Nova Scotia	19
New Brunswick	15
Newfoundland	8
and Prince Edward Island	5

18. Until the Official Census of 1871 has been made up, there shall be no change in the number of Representatives from the several sections.

19. Immediately after the completion of the Census of 1871, and immediately after every Decennial Census thereafter, the Representation from each section in the House of Commons shall be re-adjusted on the basis of Population.

20. For the purpose of such re-adjustments, Lower Canada shall always be assigned sixty-five members, and each of the other sections shall at each re-adjustment receive, for the ten years then next succeeding, the number of members to which it will be entitled on the same ratio of representation to population as Lower Canada will enjoy according to the Census last taken by having sixty-five members.

21. No reduction shall be made in the number of Members returned by any section, unless its population shall have decreased relatively to the population of the whole Union to the extent of five per centum.

22. In computing at each decennial period, the number of Members to which each section is entitled, no fractional parts shall be considered, unless when exceeding one half the number entitling to a Member, in which case a Member shall be given for each such fractional part.

The powers of the General Parliament are expressed in section 29 of the Report.

29. The General Parliament shall have power to make Laws for the peace, welfare and good Government of the Federated Provinces (saving the Sovereignty of England) and especially Laws respecting the following subjects:—

1. The Public Debt and Property.
2. The Regulation of Trade and Commerce.
3. The imposition or regulation of Duties of Customs on imports and Exports, except on Exports of Timber, Logs, Masts, Spars, Deals, and Sawn Lumber, and of Coal and other Minerals.
4. The imposition or regulation of Excise Duties.
5. The raising of money by all or any other modes or systems of Taxation.
6. The Borrowing of Money on the Public Credit.
7. Postal Service.
8. Lines of Steam or other Ships. Railways, Canals and other works, connecting any two or more of the Provinces together or extending beyond the limits of any Province.
9. Lines of Steamships between the Federated Provinces and other Countries.
10. Telegraphic Communication and the incorporation of Telegraph Companies.
11. All such works as shall, although lying wholly within any Province, be specially declared by the Acts authorizing them to be for the general dvantage
12. The Census.
13. Militia—Military and Naval Service, and
14. Beacons, Buoys and Light Houses.
15. Navigation and Shipping.
16. Quarantine.
17. Sea Coast and Inland Fisheries.
18. Ferries between any Province and a Foreign Country, or between any two Provinces.
19. Currency and Coinage.
20. Banking, Incorporation of Banks, and the issue of paper money.
21. Savings Banks.
22. Weights and Measures.
23. Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes.
24. Interest.
25. Legal Tender.
26. Bankruptcy and Insolvency.
27. Patents of Invention and Discovery.
28. Copy Rights.
29. Indians and Lands reserved for the Indians.
30. Naturalization and Aliens.
31. Marriage and Divorce.
32. The Criminal Law, excepting the Constitution of Courts of Criminal Jurisdiction, but including the procedure in Criminal matters.
33. Rendering uniform all or any of the laws relative to property and civil rights in Upper Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, and rendering uniform the procedure of all or any of the Courts in these Provinces; but any Statute for this purpose shall have no force or authority in any Province until sanctioned by the Legislature thereof.
34. The establishment of a General Court of Appeal for the Federated Provinces.
35. Immigration.
36. Agriculture.
37. And generally respecting all matters of a general character, not specially and exclusively reserved for the Local Governments and Legislatures.

To promote the peace, security, welfare and good government of his country, should be an object of earnest solicitude with every citizen. Good government, peace, security and prosperity cannot exist in any country unless it be governed by laws founded upon "right reason." The knowledge and virtue which are requisite in Legislators, in order to qualify and dispose them to enact wise and just laws, are likely to be found in a much greater degree in the Parliament of the Confederation, among the representatives of four millions, than in the Legislative Halls of Prince Edward Island, where but 80,000 people are represented; and, inasmuch as that true law on which their Legislation will, I trust, ever be founded, is, in its nature, universal, immutable and unchangeable—not one thing to-day and another to-morrow—not one thing in Charlottetown and another in Ottawa, I think it is a matter of congratulation to all, and one of the strongest arguments in favor of Confederation, that our incorporation into the Great British American Union would confer upon us the many important advantages which would necessarily result from bringing us under the operation of the Laws which the General Parliament, in its wisdom, may deem proper for securing the peace, welfare, security and good government of the Confederated Provinces.

It must be apparent to all that Prince Edward Island, with its limited area of one million three hundred thousand acres, and its small population of eighty thousand, cannot reasonably expect to be represented either in the House of Commons of a Confederacy of nearly four millions, or in its Legislative Council, by a number of members sufficiently large to enable the Island to influence, in any material degree, the Legislative action of either of these bodies. If it shall be our privilege to enter the Confederation under the terms proposed in the Report of the Quebec Conference, we shall have five representatives in an Assembly consisting of 194 members; and if our interests cannot be protected by that number, depend upon it we should not be safer, though we had *six* or even *ten* representatives. Our safety will consist in the fact that *our* interests would be the interests of our fellow subjects throughout the Confederation, and that every member who takes his seat in the House of Commons, or in the Legislative Council, would be, to all intents and purposes, a representative of Prince Edward Island. The general Government will possess power to impose duties of Customs and Excise, and also to impose such general taxes as they may deem requisite. This power, I shall be told, the Federal Legislature would exercise, wholly uninfluenced and uncontrolled by the representatives of the people of this Island. The *support* of the *National Government*—the developement of the national Trade and Commerce—and the security and defence of our common country—would alone be the objects, for the promotion of which taxation will be imposed by the general Legislature; and I submit that no inhabitant of this Island, entertaining proper views of his obligations as a citizen, would be found unwilling that we should contribute our full share of the funds requisite for these purposes.

That Prince Edward Island would send but five members to the Federal House of Commons, is, to my mind, no valid reason why the people of this Island should fear excessive taxation. In the Federal Legislature, I presume, there would not be class legislation; and, I think, we may rest assured that the people of Canada, and of the larger Provinces, would look to it that taxation be kept as low as possible. Of every one hundred dollars of taxation, imposed by the general Legislature, Prince Edward Island would contribute about $2.50; the remaining $97.50 would be borne by other portions of the Confederation.

I have seen recently, in the local newspapers, an appalling array of figures, designed to represent the millions in which we are to be taxed for the construction of Canals in Upper Canada, for the development of the trade of the "Great West" with the seaboard; and I should most certainly have been induced to join the ranks of the opponents of Confederation, had I regarded these figures, and the remarks which accompanied them, in the light in which I am inclined to believe they have been regarded by numbers of the tax-payers of Prince Edward Island. Very many have been induced to believe that the improvements referred to, which are estimated to cost a sum of money so large that our local Government, extravagant as it is, could not spend it in less time than several centuries, are at once to be undertaken, and the Confederation taxed to find the means to pay for them. I, being aware that the danger of absolute ruin, to arise out of the construction of Canals, is merely imaginary, notwithstanding the reading of the letter in which these frightful figures are paraded, have remained to the present moment an humble, but zealous advocate for Confederation. If there are in this assembly any who have read the alarming statements relative to these improvements—estimated to cost some fifty millions of dollars—I trust they will allow me to read, for their information, the 69th section of the Report of the Conference, which is as follows:

69. The communications with the North-Western Territory, and the improvements required for the development of the Trade of the Great West with the Seaboard, are regarded by this Conference as subjects of the highest importance to the Federal Provinces, and shall be prosecuted at the earliest possible period that the state of the Finances will permit.

Here it is expressly stated that the improvements required for the development of the trade of the Great West with the seaboard, shall be prosecuted "*at the earliest possible period that the state of the finances will permit.*" The opponents of Confederation may assert that these improvements, when completed, would not benefit Prince Edward Island, or even that they would injure the Island, and would benefit Upper Canada alone. I believe that the development of the trade of the Great West with the seaboard would prove highly beneficial to every portion of the Confederation. The Maritime Provinces could not but derive benefit from the opening of a passage for ships, from the interior of British America through the noble lakes of Canada, and the great River St. Lawrence to the Atlantic Ocean. If the representatives of Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island should consider that the proposed improvements for the development of the trade of the Great West would not be a general benefit, they, having a large majority in both branches of the general Legislature, would not sanction the prosecution of them. The first object of the members of the Legislature, as well those who represent the Maritime Provinces,

(*Concluded on the last page.*)

MEETING AT SOURIS.

The Hons. Joseph Hensley and Donald Beaton, Representatives of the 1st District of King's County, attended a very large meeting of their constituents, numbering over 400 voters, from all parts of the District, and comprising the stamina of the County, assembled at Souris, on Wednesday, the 8th inst., for the developement and discussion of the principles and conditions of the momentous question of Union of the Colonies, as agreed upon at the Quebec Conference, by the Delegates of the Lower Provinces in October last.

The meeting having been organized with Edward Kickham, Esq. in the chair, Hon. Mr. Hensley arose and addressed the meeting in a speech occupying about an hour. The hon. gentleman went fully into the Confederation scheme, and made a searching analytical review of the Constitution. Among other important points, Mr Hensley adhered to representation by population in the Lower House; but emphatically claimed numerical equality for Prince Edward Island in the Upper House, as a safeguard to our rights. The hon. gentleman attacked the financial scheme with much acumen, and enunciated his opinion that no adequate equivalent was given to P. E. Island for the proposed relinquishment of her Revenue.

The hon. gentleman contended that under the wording of the resolutions, the proceeds of lands purchased under the Purchase Bill would belong to the General Government, and not to the Local, as assumed by Union advocates. Any such lands as were vested in Her Majesty and ungranted, would go to the Local Government. The proceeds of the lands under the Purchase Bill would *still go in reduction of the debt incurred by their purchase*, which was to be assumed by the Federation. It would absorb much time and space to detail the exceptions taken by the hon. gentleman to the general scope of the conditions of the Confederation scheme. Yet Mr. Hensley was not opposed to the Union if just and equitable terms were conceded to this Island. Mr. H. submitted his digest of the Conference scheme, and expressed his opinion thereon, for the calm and deliberate consideration of his constituents; and left the matter of Union or no Union with them to decide upon.

The Hon. Donald Beaton followed Mr. Hensley in a clear and succinct matter of fact address, in which he eulogised his hon. colleague's exposition of the Union Constitution, and expressed his adhesion to the principles and opinions enunciated by Mr. Hensley. The Hon. Mr. B. received the unanimous applause of the assemblage.

Wm. MacGowan, Esq., Hon. Emanuel McEachen, E. B. Muttart, Esq., M. D., Donald McDonald, Esq., Lot 45, Hon. James Dingwell, Michael McWade and P. Leslie, Esqrs., each respectively followed, expressing similar opinions. Two or three gentlemen, however, differed somewhat, but not materially, excepting only Hon. Emanuel McEachen, who was opposed to any Union, and was desirous to "Let well alone."

The other gentlemen above named would accept Union upon just and equitable conditions.—Very excellent and pertinently terse addresses were delivered by the gentlemen quoted; each did his convictions and judgment justice in the enunciation; and Michael McWade, Esquire, was particularly happy in his argumentative, liberal, and comprehensive address, which was moreover graced by dashes of pertinent originality. All the speeches were listened to with marked attention, and received the respect of the assembly in applause.

On motion of Dr. Muttart, seconded by John Stewart, Esquire, the following Resolution was adopted by acclamation:—

1. *Resolved*, That in the opinion of this meeting the terms embodied in the Resolutions adopted at the Quebec Conference on the basis of a proposed *Confederation of the British North American Colonies* are unjust and disadvantageous to this Island, and that no such Confederation will be acceptable to the Electors of this District, unless a considerable alteration be made in the terms proposed.

Moved by the Hon. Emanuel McEachen, and seconded by Charles McEachen, Esquire,

2. *Resolved*, That the Representatives of this District be requested to resist any final legislative action on the question of Confederation as laid down in the Report of the Delegates, until after a dissolution of the present House of Assembly, and a direct appeal to the people on the subject. Passed *nem con*.

Michael McWade, Esquire, moved, and Donald McDonald, Esquire, seconded the annexed:—

3. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Hon. Joseph Hensley for his attendance and explanations on the occasion.

Passed unanimously.

E. Kickham, Esquire, having vacated the chair, Dr. Muttart was called thereto.

The thanks of the meeting having been proposed to E. Kickham for his masterly conduct in the chair, were given with applause and were succeeded by three cheers for the Representatives of the District.

Hon. Emanuel McEachen moved that the proceedings of this meeting be published in the various papers in Charlottetown. This motion was adopted by the meeting.

Three cheers were given for Prince Edward Island, and three more for Queen Victoria, when the meeting dispersed.—*Com.*

PERFECTLY SATISFACTORY.—This is the expression of every one after using MRS. S. A. ALLEN'S World's Hair Restorer and Zylobalsamum, or Hair Dressing. They are unequalled for restoring, invigorating and beautifying the hair, rendering it soft, silky and glossy, and disposing it to remain in any desired position, quickly cleansing the scalp, arresting the fall and imparting to the hair a healthy and natural color. No lady's toilet is complete without them. Every Druggist sells them. W. R. Watson, Agent for P. E. Island.

Among the new works announced for immediate publication in London, "Sea Sickness, its Nature and Treatment," by Dr. John Chapman. If Dr. Chapman can suggest a remedy for this very unpleasant weakness, he will be entitled to the blessings of all who are subject to its attacks. Indeed this class of sufferers have been laughed at long enough, and it is quite time that modern science should give them some relief from their torments.

CONFEDERATION MEETING.

The Town Meeting, held on Friday evening last, in the Colonial Building, called by His Worship the Mayor, in compliance with a Requisition from the citizens of Charlottetown, was attended by nearly all the leading men of the City, representing every branch of trade. A large number of the members of the different professions were also present. Many respectable and influential farmers from the country also attended this meeting.

At half-past six o'clock, His Worship the Mayor was called to the Chair. He was supported on his right by John Morris, Esquire, High Sheriff of Queen's County, and on his left by James Reddin, Esquire, City Councillor.

Peter McGowan, Esquire, City Clerk, then read the Requisition, after which His Worship briefly announced to the audience the object of the Meeting, which, he said, was then open for the discussion of the momentous question of Colonial Confederation.

H. HASZARD, Esquire, then rose and moved that the Meeting be adjourned because the same subject was about to be debated at a Meeting of the Debating Society, in the Temperance Hall, that same evening. Mr. D. Laird seconded Mr. Haszard's motion.

His Worship the Mayor then stated that he considered it his duty, in compliance with the requisition submitted to him, to proceed with the meeting, for it surely could not be thought proper that a Public Meeting of the Citizens, so called, should give way to the meeting of a private Debating Society.

Hon. Mr. COLES said he was in favor of discussing the question openly and fairly, and free from the restrictions of the rules of any Society.

Hon. D. DAVIES said he regretted that two meetings on this subject should be held on the same evening in Charlottetown; but it could hardly be expected that the whole public were to be ruled by a Debating Society. He would, therefore, support free discussion on this subject.

F. BRECKEN, Esquire, expressed his regret that any ill-feeling should be manifested about this matter. He and his colleague (the Hon. D. Davies) waited on the President of the Debating Society, Mr. Laird, who readily expressed his concurrence with their views relative to the discussion of this question; and said that he would use his influence with the Committee of the Debating Society to have the subject adjourned to their next night of meeting; and, from the manner in which Mr. Laird expressed himself at the last meeting of the Society, he (Mr. Brecken) understood that they would be willing to give place to a public meeting relative to this discussion. To him (Mr. B.) it appeared extraordinary that the members of a private Society, which exists to-day and may be defunct to-morrow, should arrogate to themselves the exclusive right to discuss a subject of such vital importance to the whole public. He himself was told at the meeting of that Society, last Friday evening, that he had no right to open his mouth there.

Mr. D. LAIRD said that the subject presented a large field for discussion, and he could not see why that very night must be named by His Worship for the discussion. The citizens of Charlottetown had to be *wrenched* out on this subject by the Debating Society.

F. BRECKEN, Esqr., replied to Mr. Laird, and said, that when the Society of which Mr. Laird is President declared that they would not give way to the public meeting, he would ask, were the public to succumb to the "little brief authority" of a Debating Society?

H. HASZARD, Esqr., stated that the public had declined to take up the question.

Hon. T. HEATH HAVILAND expressed his surprise that any Association, got up for literary purposes, should attempt to narrow up the rights of the community, by the restrictions of their Society, when discussing the all absorbing and important question for which this meeting was convened.

The Meeting having, by cries of "Question," given expression to their desire that the business of the evening should be proceeded with; and Mr. Haviland having been called upon to open the discussion, that hon. and learned gentleman came forward, in obedience to the call, and, having taken his place on the platform, spoke as follows:—

HON. T. H. HAVILAND.—Mr. Mayor, I must confess that, for many reasons, I would have preferred that it had fallen to the lot of some one else to open the debate upon the momentous question which is to be discussed here this evening. The first reason by which I am influenced in feeling a reluctance to be the first to address the meeting, is that, in consequence of a painful affection in my throat, occasioned by a cold, I fear that my voice may fail me before I shall have been able to conclude the observations, which, having once entered upon the question, I shall feel it to be my duty, both to this meeting and myself, to submit for the consideration of the public mind. And, besides, I was under the impression that some of those who are possessed of greater influence than myself, and who, as respects the Confederation movement, have played much more important parts than I have done, would, this evening, have been here to open up the question, and to sustain the views which they have already made it known to the public they entertain concerning it. I am not a parliamentary representative of Charlottetown, nor even of Queen's County; and, as I think a public meeting called here, in Queen's County—in Charlottetown, the capital of the Island—must, for many reasons, be much more influential than any other which has been held, or which is likely to be held, in any other part of the Colony, I think I am not exactly the individual who should assume to himself the onus, the duty, the responsibility, of justifying the steps which have been taken by our Government, in their endeavour to ascertain whether the contemplated Union could be entered into by us, as a people, upon terms which would be really beneficial and advantageous to us; and I also feel persuaded that, in my present public position—although I am a member of the Legislature—although I was one of the delegates to the Union Conference, held in Quebec—and although I am decidedly a Unionist—it is not exactly my place to be the foremost, this evening, to engage public attention by an assertion of the correctness of those views by which the advocates of the contemplated Federation are, and have been influenced in the position which they have assumed with respect to it. I was in hopes that either the Hon. Colonial Gray, or the Hon. Edward Palmer, would have been here to open the discussion of the Union Question which is expected to take place this evening. Precedence might, with propriety, have been given to either of them; to the first, as the late Premier of the Government, and as a strenuous and leading advocate of the Union; and to the other, as the Attorney General, the first law officer of the Crown, in this Colony, and as—now at least, whatever else he may have appeared to be in Canada—a determined and persevering opponent of the Confederation Scheme.

The Honorable the Attorney General, however,—strange as it must appear to most of us that he should do so—notwithstanding that he is fully aware that this public meeting of his own parliamentary constituents has been duly called, and is now being held, in compliance with a requisition to His Worship the Mayor, most respectably signed, has, it seems, preferred attending a meeting of a Literary Society or Debating Club, which, perhaps, he is now addressing, and to which he is imparting his views of the great question of the day—the Question of Confederation—has, I say, it seems, preferred doing this to appearing here, this evening, at a public meeting of his parliamentary constituents and fellow citizens—especially convened for the purpose of discussing that great question—and imparting to them, as he is in duty bound to do, the reasons by which he is influenced in his opposition to the Confederation Scheme.

In that Literary Society or Club, which the Hon. the Attorney General has, this evening, thought proper to honour with his presence and to enlighten with his views, in preference to attending here to discharge his bounden duty to his constituents, there are, doubtless, several individuals of great respectability and influence in the community; but, as a whole, it is chiefly composed of young men—to many of whom, as respects their age, I am old enough to be the father—young men who—in a manner, in itself, praise worthy enough—have associated themselves together for the purpose of endeavouring by their discussions of public questions, to acquire a facility in oratory, and to become proficients in the art of public speaking; but I hesitate not to say that it is most presumptuous, most preposterous, on the part of such a Society, to arrogate to themselves the right to direct the public mind, or to control the public discussion of any public question whatever. On the evening of Friday week last, I, on invitation, attended a meeting of that Society, at the Temperance Hall, to which the public were admitted, on the payment of 9d. each, and on which occasion it was proposed that the great Question of Confederation should be discussed, "under their auspices," as they expressed it. The public having been invited to attend—and especially as they were compelled to pay for their admission—it might have been expected that, by whatever rules they chose to govern their private debates, they would, on that occasion at least, have, of their own accord, suspended such of them as militated against that freedom of speech, which, not only in parliament, but in all duly constituted and properly regulated public meetings, is the privilege of all who are permitted to take part in the discussion of the question under consideration. When I found that their rules were not thus to be relaxed, for the occasion, I remonstrated against the impropriety of their binding down to their observance the public men whom they had invited to attend their meeting that evening, and who, no doubt, it was expected, would incline to take a part in the discussion; but my remonstrance was not only ineffectual, but it was so ill received, as, on reflection, to make me think I had been very foolish in saying a word upon the subject. However let that pass; and, since the hon. gentlemen, of whom I have just spoken, who, I say again, ought, in my opinion, to have considered it to be their bounden duty to be here to open, or to take a leading part in, the most important discussion appointed for this evening, have, as it seems, thought otherwise, I will, without farther preface—having been called upon, as one of the late Delegates, to give an exposition of my views and sentiments concerning the proposed Federation, and having consented to do so—now address myself to the task to the best of my ability.

We are now met, Mr. Chairman, either—according to the views and convictions which we may individually entertain relative to the question—to advocate the contemplated Federation, and to maintain the propriety and justice of the terms or conditions, on which it is proposed that we, the people of Prince Edward Island, shall become a party therein; or to endeavour to prove that it would be much better for us to remain a separate and independent British Colony, as we are, and to progress, as best we may, in the old beaten and familiar track. First, as respects the principles which are to be called into action in the formation of the proposed Federation, it is our duty to enquire—are they in accordance, are they in perfect unison with those of that noble, that unrivalled Constitution, under which it is our boast, our glory, and our happiness now to live? The principles, in conformity with which to lay the foundation, and, in the most scrupulous observance of which, to raise the superstructure, and closely and firmly to unite and bind together the several parts of the proposed Federation, it was, Mr. Chairman, by the Conference—a most unmistakeable evidence of admiration and love of that Constitution, and loyalty to the British throne, which cannot be surpassed—unanimously and enthusiastically agreed should be the principles of the British Constitution, and of their strict and most scrupulous adherence to that determination, the Federal Constitution, so framed by them, bears, in every particular the most undeniable evidence. So far at least then that Constitution must be in accordance with the predilections of every truly loyal subject of the British Crown in our community. In other respects, it must be confessed that the question is beset with many difficulties; and I believe that nine tenths of the people of this Colony are, at present, decidedly opposed to the Union; but, at the same time, I believe that the time will come, after the question shall have been properly sifted, when nine tenths of the people at the Polls will pronounce in favor of it.

Uninformed and ignorant, however, as the the people are at present, concerning the probable general working of the Constitution and the articles on which it is proposed the Union shall be entered into, it is not at all surprising that their prejudices should strongly incline them to oppose it. We should bear in mind, however, that history always reproduces itself, and that all questions of a similar nature have been encountered and stoutly opposed by numerical majorities, until after having been fully and properly ventilated, and their principles and scope been thoroughly comprehended by those who had at first been alarmed by the announcement of the novel experiments and innovations which would be consequent upon their adoption, the tide of public opinion turned in their favour, and finally carried them happily and triumphantly into operation.

Thus it was, for a long time, with the question of Parliamentary Reform in Great Britain. When it was first mooted, in the Imperial Senate, by the celebrated William Pitt, the proposition was scouted, nay, almost looked upon with detestation and horror, as revolutionary and seditious, by his fellow statesmen and legislators. And years after, even when after long and earnest agitation of the question, the majority of the people had become thoroughly convinced of its propriety, its wisdom, its necessity; even at the time when its justice was insisted upon, and the adoption of that measure by Parliament demanded, by the almost unanimous voice of the whole nation, and not a few of the members of the Legislature themselves had become its open and decided advocates, Charles Lord Grey, when he raised his voice in its favour, in the House of Commons, could scarcely obtain a hearing. Its advocates, however, nothing daunted by the powerful opposition which they encountered, but strong in their convictions of the wisdom, justice and propriety of the great and fundamental reform which they sought to accomplish—and of the absolute necessity of which, for the preservation and promotion of the peace, well-being, and prosperity of the country, they were thoroughly convinced—persevered in their patriotic endeavors, and, at length, those endeavours resulted in that extension of the electoral franchise, and the liberties of the people, which, although at first dreaded and denounced as revolutionary, republican and anarchical, has happily been found to have had no other effects than those of imparting greater security and strength to constitutional power, increasing the love and veneration of the people for the Crown and the noble and time-honoured institutions of the land, and imparting new life and vigour, encouragement and contentedness to the whole body of the nation in all the various relations of life and society.

So was it also with respect to the abolition of slavery in the colonial possessions of Great Britain. The great philanthropists, Wilberforce, Clark and Brougham, who first raised their voices in favor of the emancipation of the slaves in the British West Indies, were looked upon and decried, both within and without the walls of Parliament, as the enemies of the commerce of their country. Upheld, however, by their internal convictions of the justice of the measure which they advocated, they nobly persevered, their efforts were at last crowned with success, and the Imperial Parliament, in 1833, by one of the noblest resolutions that have ever done honor to a national legislature, consummated the triumph of the labors of these great men in the cause of humanity, by voting £20,000,000 sterling for the emancipation of the negro slaves in the British West Indies, and by decreeing the abolition, for ever, throughout the British empire, of the most abominable and corrupting institution of slavery.

Again, so was it with respect to the long-agitated and much-vexed question of Catholic Emancipation. The few liberal-minded and enlightened Protestant members of the Imperial Parliament who first ventured to raise their voices in favour of it, were assailed and denounced as the enemies of the established church and of Protestant succession to the throne. The opposition which they encountered served only, however, to render them more strenuous in the cause; and, in the end, through their reiterated and persevering exertions, the popular voice was raised in its favour, its enemies in high places quailed before such demonstration of public sentiment, Catholic Emancipation was recommended to Parliament in the speech from the throne, and, finally, its triumph was secured by a Bill, which, although vigorously opposed, passed both Houses by triumphant majorities, and was promptly confirmed by the royal assent; and, thus, when justice and right reason arose in the ascendant, political disqualification of christian men, on account of the peculiar tenets and doctrines of the church to which they individually belonged, was justly and happily expunged from the statute books of the realm. (Cheers.)

Free Trade also, after its introduction, had been long withstood and most furiously battled against by the landocracy of the country and others, who fancied that the security of their so-called vested interests would be most injuriously affected, if not completely destroyed, by the legislative adoption and enforcement of its principles, has, at length—happily for the prosperity of the trade of Great Britain and for the lessening of the hardships and privations of the poorer, the labouring, and operative classes of her population, and to the great enhancement of their family comforts and social enjoyments—become part and parcel of the established and leading financial, industrial and commercial policy of the kingdom, and, in its results and progressive operation, it has borne the fullest and most satisfactory evidence to the wisdom and patriotism of its first advocates—Cobden out of Parliament, and Charles Villiers in it—and so far has the triumph of Free Trade principles been from being detrimental, as it was loudly proclaimed it would be, to public, and to class or individual interests, that their free operation has carried the agricultural and the commercial prosperity of Great Britain to a greater height than either of them had ever previously attained.

Again, even in Science, the greatest and most beneficial improvements and inventions have been ridiculed, decried, and opposed by majorities, incapable of either comprehending their principles, or of foreseeing or calculating upon the immense advantages which would result from their adoption. Thus when George Stevenson first projected the construction of railroads and the adaptation to them of locomotive carriages, he was ridiculed and scouted as a maniac; but, in spite of all the ignorant prejudice and opposition which he encountered in his attempts to give effect to his grand scientific conceptions, he lived to see their triumphant practical adoption, and to be gratified, if not fully compensated in fame and fortune, for the immense benefits which his great sagacity, inventive genius, and energy had conferred and were continuing to confer on all the families of men throughout the civilized world; and now already even in the comparatively new and wilderness countries of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick there are 2500 miles of railroad.

Another example of the opposition, on the part of uninformed and prejudiced majorities, which demonstrative Science itself has had to encounter, and over which it finally triumphed, may be found in the history of Steam Navigation. When ocean steam navigation was first projected, the great scientific Dr. Lardner himself was among the foremost to ridicule the idea, and to pronounce the conception impracticable. But now, in spite of Dr. Lardner's condemnatory opinion of the conception—in spite of scientific incredulity itself—it has been found so completely practicable that the communication between the Old and the New World, by means of steam navigation, has been rendered so safe and certain, that we can calculate to a day, or even to an hour, the time of a steamer's arrival at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, from Liverpool, in England; and news, of public, commercial or private importance—of peace or war, of the rise or fall of funds and the markets, or of family relations—which, in my school-boy days, were here sometimes anxiously looked for in vain through the long and tedious period of two or three months, are now received once a fortnight.

And so, I confidently venture to predict, will it be, before any great length of time shall have elapsed, with respect to the great question of the Confederation of the British American Provinces. In this Island, at this moment, the Unionists have to contend, not only with the prejudices, arising from a want of proper information concerning the question in all its several relations and bearings, by which the great mass of the people are actuated, but they have also to do battle, in favor of the proposed Confederation, with many of the most intelligent, the best informed, and most influential men in the Colony, amongst our merchants and agriculturists, who are, at present, perhaps thoroughly—although, I believe, upon most erroneous conceptions of what would be the effects of the Union upon their own private interests—convinced that the new order of commercial regulations which would be introduced by it, could not fail to affect them most injuriously in every branch of trade and traffic in which they might be engaged.

But that with which the Unionists have chiefly to contend is the dread of taxation—"the raw head and bloody bones" with which, as Judge Wilmot of New Brunswick has well and happily expressed it, political nurses—our present alarmists and anti-Union agitators, to wit—employ to terrify their children into obedience. And as Judge Wilmot, when adverting to this "*bug-a-boo*," most justly observed, so do I now: As respects the prospective taxation to which, under a federal government and legislature, it is possible we may be subjected, there might be something in the apprehension of it, if we were required to give up the right of imposing it to an irresponsible power; but, when it comes to taxation by representatives, and a continually recurring responsibility of the representatives to their constituencies, the security against taxation remains with the people themselves. To say that we should be either unjustly or unequally taxed, or ruined by the burthens laid upon us by the Federal legislature, is, therefore, worse than a fallacy; for even if we should be called upon to contribute a little more to the public revenue than we do at present, we should gain much more than an equivalent in the increase of the general prosperity.

The question of Colonial Confederation is the greatest, the most momentous—not only to the existing generations in these Provinces, but to generations yet unborn which shall come after them—that has ever agitated the public mind in British America since first the British flag waved triumphant and supreme over any portion of American territory; and it is pregnant with greater and more lasting results than any which have arisen from any changes—even the greatest—which, as directly affecting the best interests and destinies of British races or British subjects in America, have as yet occurred on this side of the Atlantic. When compared with it, all other questions which have ever in these Provinces, been most seriously debated and discussed in our Legislatures, or most deeply pondered, earnestly agitated, and anxiously canvassed among the people, seem to have been matters light as air, and projects of the merest insignificance. The light of every other question of change or improvement—how great and important soever—which has hitherto awakened and lured on to action the intellects of our Colonial statesmen, pales into nothing before this; and in it we must eventually, however reluctantly, consent to live, and move, and have our being as a people. It will be in vain for us to kick against the pricks. If the Canadas, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland, agree, by resolutions in their several legislatures, to enter into the proposed Confederation, our determination to remain out in the cold shades will be altogether in vain, for it will be impossible for us to do so. As Rhode Islands did at the formation of the great North American Republic, at the Congress in Philadelphia, we may kick up our heels, and refuse to enter into the Union; but as, after having stood aloof from that great Republican Confederation for a period of eighteen months or two years, Rhode Island was glad to humble herself, and knock at the door of the newly-formed Republic for admission, so shall we—should we now refuse to enter into the contemplated Colonial Union on the terms proposed to us—be found knocking at its door for admission, and be right glad to be admitted, even it may be on terms much less favourable to our interests than those to which, were we truly wise in our generation, we would now accede, and of which we would most cheerfully avail ourselves.

I think we are premature in deciding against the question. Before doing so, or, perhaps, before coming to any conclusion respecting it, it would, I think, be better for the people to wait and see what course shall be taken with respect to it by the peoples Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland. If they should agree to enter into the proposed Confederation, and we should refuse to do so—in that case, if our reasons were found to be good and substantial, they would, doubtless, be duly respected by the Imperial authorities, and measures would be taken by them for their removal; but unless they should appear to be just and reasonable,—unless they should be politically sound—they would meet with but little regard, and Great Britain would treat us as a good, kind, and wise father is sometimes found to do a spoiled and refractory child—compel us to embrace what would be most for our own benefit and advantage, although we had not the wisdom to appreciate its worth. We may rest assured that Great Britain will never consent that 80,000 or even 100,000 of her subjects shall be allowed obstinately and perversely to remain a stumbling block in the way of the formation of a new nation to be constituted, under the shelter and protection of her flag, to counterbalance the dangerous and threatening power of the North American Republican States.

I need not now go into the history of the simultaneous action of the Legislatures of the Lower Provinces, in 1864, in consequence of which it was determined that a Conference of Delegates, representing them all, should be held in Charlottetown; as that is already, I presume, sufficiently well known to the public. It was, however, I may mention, that during the holding of that Conference, one fine morning in September, a splendid steamer entered our harbour, bearing to our shores, some of the foremost of the statesmen and public men of Canada, (the greatest Canada has ever produced) who had come down from their own Province, in not in the expectation of being allowed to take part in the deliberations and debates of that Conference, yet in the well-founded hope that they would courteously be allowed to occupy seats in the Conference Chamber, as hearers of the discussions which might therein take place of the question—a proposed Legislative Union of the Lower or Maritime Provinces—which the Delegates had been especially appointed to consider. In this hope the Canadian statesmen who had thus visited us, were not disappointed. They were freely and courteously allowed to be present in the Conference Chamber during the deliberations of the Delegates of the Maritime Provinces. As the Conference sat with closed doors, the public are ignorant of the manner in which the question of a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces was entertained or discussed by the Delegates; but this they knew, that, in consequence of the views which these Canadian statesmen had been allowed to propound to the Conference, Lord Monck, soon after their return to Canada, summoned a meeting of Delegates from all the Maritime Provinces, as well as Delegates on behalf of both Upper and Lower Canada, to be held at Quebec, to take into consideration the feasibility of a Federal Union of all the British North American Provinces, with a view to the better promotion and protection of their common interests, and, should such a Union appear to be practicable; for the further purpose of endeavouring to frame terms and conditions, and to devise such a Constitution for the whole intended Confederation as would, in their operation, be just and equitable to each and all the Provinces, severally considered, which were to be included in the Confederation. It is said by the opponents of the proposed Union, in Prince Edward Island, and has been again and again reiterated by them, that the desire to accomplish the Union, entertained by the leading men of Canada, has arisen solely out of the difficulties with which, owing to their sectional differences, they are beset; and, in consequence of which, they find it impossible to impart stability to any Government which they may form, whether composed of the leading men of one or the other of the two great political parties into which the people are divided, or whether even formed by a coalition of the leading men of both. In