

In the first place he begged leave to trouble the House with some remarks concerning himself. He had been ten years in the House and had always voted consistently. During that time he had not said a great deal about himself; but now he begged leave to say a few words. The Attorney General said that he (Mr. D.) had gone over to the other side. He would like to ask what side that is, and he would like to ask on what side the Attorney General was?

ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Against the Quebec Scheme.

MR. DESBRISAY.—He also was opposed to the Quebec Scheme; but the question of Confederation had no right to absorb all the other interests of the Province. He had come out as Conservative and he had always voted consistently. When the Quebec Scheme was first agitated in the Province he was the first man of any prominence in his own County who opposed it, and he was opposed to it still; as he said, he was a consistent Conservative, he had been born a Conservative, he had lived a Conservative, and a Conservative he intended to remain. When the Attorney General said that he (Mr. D.) had gone over to the other side he would like to be told what was that other side. He would like to know what was the Attorney General's side of politics? He thought he ought to get an answer.

ATTORNEY GENERAL.—When he said the hon. member of Kent had gone over to the other side, it was because he had seconded the amendment to the Address.

MR. DESBRISAY then proceeded to say that when he read the Speech, and the paragraph on union, he felt that he was absolved from any tie to the Government, and he appealed to the conservative members if the course the Government had taken on that question, in not even consulting them, entitled them to their support. He would take the opportunity to say that he had not changed his views as a Confederate, and, therefore, he was not to be told that he had gone over to the other side. What claim, he would ask, had the Government now upon the conservative interests of the country. He wanted to ask on what side of politics the Attorney General was? Could he tell? He wanted to put forth to the country that he (Mr. D.) was a conservative, and had not acted inconsistently. He came to the House an anti-Confederate, and he intended to vote as an anti-Confederate. But there were other interests that hon. gentlemen had a right to advocate. On what side, he would ask, was the Attorney General? That gentleman had in his time opposed Railway construction; he had opposed the Militia, he had opposed King's College, he had opposed other interests. Where was he now in regard to them? He did not think it lay in his (Attorney General's) mouth to taunt him (Mr. D.) with having gone over to the other side. The Attorney General had read a division the other day upon the Post Office Bill, on which thirty names were recorded as supporters of the Government. Had the Government done their duty they would have retained that majority; they would still have had that division to support them. Had they acted as they ought to have done? Had they filed up the political offices? Had they appointed a Solicitor General and an Auditor General? But they vacillated, afraid to move or do

anything, and offering, it is said, half-a-dozen men the same office. He looked through the names on that division; where were they now? Where now, he would ask, were the conservatives? They were in the mud, and Mr. Speaker was one of them. They were nowhere at all, and never would be anywhere. He was in earnest, for he felt deeply upon this matter. The Conservatives had the position in their hands, and could have kept the reigns of power in their hands for twenty years, had they only acted like men of common judgment.

MR. DESBRISAY then proceeded to say that on account of the vacillating course the Government had pursued, the conservative party had had to submit to the most humiliating and degrading position before the country. It was well known when the present Government came into power that changes should be made. But what had they done? Nothing at all, beyond making a few changes in the Railway Department. And when the Government allowed a member in the Upper House, who was a salaried officer under them, to vote against a Government measure, he felt that the Conservatives had been placed in a most humiliating position; a position that had allowed them to be pointed at with the finger of scorn. The Government should have taken a bold stand when they had thirty men at their back. When should they ever see such a day again? Had the Government done their duty they would have made the changes that they were expected to make; they would have filed up their offices at once. He spoke what he felt. He did not want anything from the Government, but he did feel he had feelings beyond 2500 a year. He felt a pride as a member of the Conservative party, and a determination that that pride should not be broken down. If any man attempted to do that with him he would take the course with that man which he ought to do. But when he saw the Government vacillating and trimming before the country, every man who was a Conservative must have felt humiliated.

MR. DESBRISAY went on to say, he had asked the other day if the Government were prepared to submit any scheme of Confederation to the House, and it was said by the Attorney General that the Government did not intend to submit a scheme. He wished to understand the position of the Government, and he would ask them, were they prepared to go for any scheme brought in by any of their supporters?

ATTORNEY GENERAL. The Government had never heard of any scheme.

MR. DESBRISAY. That was evading the question. What he wished to know was—did the Government intend to support any scheme brought in by any one of their supporters?

ATTORNEY GENERAL. The Government had never heard of any scheme—the Government were opposed to the Quebec Scheme, and would not submit any scheme to the House.

MR. DESBRISAY. He supposed he would be obliged to let that answer go. It was impossible to draw out a direct answer to a plain question from a lawyer. On this question of Confederation he felt that the Conservatives had been deceived by the Government. He had never been able to see why this question of Confederation should have been carried so far—why it should have absorbed all the other interests of the Province—why the Con-

servative feeling should have been sacrificed to it. The Government had carried the Confederation feeling to the Bench of the country, where it never ought to have been carried. Viewing the course the Government had taken, he thought when the vote came to be taken that they would fail to secure a majority of members on their side, and he thought that they ought to fail. Where, he would like to know, were the Government? he did not believe they knew themselves. They were in this position—that in any constituency in the country they could not carry an election. Mr. D. then proceeded to speak of the non-appointment of Auditor General, and the great importance of the office to the country, as a dereliction of duty on the part of the Government, and went on to animadvert on the course the Chief Commissioner of the Board of Works had taken with the construction of the bridge over the main river of the Richibucto. Before the construction was commenced he thought it but reasonable that plans should be made and shown in the country, and he had written to the Commissioner to postpone the building of the bridge until the plans were seen; to which the Commissioner had answered that it could not be done. After the contract was taken, the whole thing was thrown up. [The Chief Commissioner here explained why the contract for building the new bridge was not carried out: the present bridge was perfectly safe, and he did not intend to renew the contract this year.] The question was not—Mr. D. said—whether the bridge was safe or not, but why the Chief Commissioner should have refused to submit a plan of the bridge, and why, after entering into a contract for building it, they had thrown the matter up? Nor could he see what could have induced the Government to give the contract to the party they did, when they knew he had made a botch of the lighthouse he had contracted to build.

MR. DESBRISAY, in concluding, said, that when he left, at dinner time, he did not expect that he would rise to speak that afternoon. He had given his reason why he had done so. He thought he had explained his position satisfactorily, and he was sure no plan of spirit could have felt in any other way than he had; and his constituents felt as he did. Before sitting down, he had a proposition to put to the House. He felt that they were in a time of trouble. The Province was threatened with invasion, and he did not think it a time when party spirit should prevail. He proposed that the House should not press the question of want of confidence further. Much as he condemned the Government for this vacillation—for their want of pluck, for their trimming course of policy they had pursued—he, for one, was perfectly willing to pass the supplies through the House at once. Let the House pass an act giving them authority to raise men and ample service—give any amount of credit and then let the House be prorogued—and let the members go to their homes, where, at this time, they were most needed. He might be wrong, but he thought that would be the wisest course to pursue in this emergency; it would be the easiest way to get over the present difficulty. If the House were prorogued, it would be best for the interests of the country.