

Hon. Attorney General.—No. We know that in this Island every teacher who received a license had to speak the English language, and the French teachers who qualified themselves for that office had to first learn the English language. This resolution provides that any teacher who will qualify himself to teach the French language, and who can obtain a certificate to that effect, shall be entitled to receive £5 additional salary from the Treasury; provided the district will make up the same amount. The French language is regarded as the best, and many consider it well worth learning, and no scholar feels that his education is complete without he knows it. If we should happen to be driven into the Dominion, and any hon. members from this House should go there, they would find it would be an advantage to understand it. I believe all Ambassadors of the Crown require to understand French, and that their correspondence is carried on in that language.

Mr. BAKER.—Mr. Chairman, no doubt any education is incomplete without a knowledge of French, but I do not agree with the learned Attorney General that it is the best language, although I admit that in Europe every person is expected to know it. I doubt whether instruction in French, as spoken here, would be understood or regarded as French by good scholars in that language, for there cannot be any doubt but that, owing to the isolation of those who speak that language here, it must have lost among them much of its original purity. I am rather surprised to hear Confederation referred to as an argument in favor of the resolution, for, on that ground alone, some might object to it. But we may yet be brought into contact with our neighbors in Canada, and, if so, it would be well for our people to be acquainted with the French language. If it is intended as an encouragement for the cultivation of that language in its purity, it would be money well appropriated; but it would be well to know if it is wholly intended for the few French teachers of the Island.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON.—I have no objection to do full justice to the French people, but I doubt the utility of teaching that language in our common schools; or that a large number will ever be required to go from here to represent us in the New Dominion. You know, Sir, as well as I do, that the French teachers, before they can now receive a License, have to first learn a language that is not their vernacular, and the Gaelic people have to graft the English upon their mother tongue before they can become teachers, and these people love their Gaelic just as much as it is possible for any people to esteem a language. If this resolution is to be carried, I would like to introduce a similar one in favor of the Gaelic speaking people of this Island, for I think it will be admitted that they are on a par with those who have to graft the native Saxon upon their French. One thing I have observed is, that the French people of this Island use more words of broken English than the same class do in Lower Canada, or did when I was among them. The Gaelic speaking people are entitled to the same privileges that the French are.

Mr. ARSENAULT.—Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for Charlottetown (Mr. B.) is doubtful whether the French language spoken in this Island is French at all, and is doubtful if it is as good as that which is spoken in France or Canada. Well I do not know much about the French language as spoken in France, as I have never been there, but I presume it is the same language as is contained in books written in French, and when we use those same books in our schools I do not see why we should not learn good French; and as to Canada, I believe the French inhabitants of this Island speak the language