

He had referred to the insulting minute of the 12th July, in answer to a dispatch of Mr. Cardwell of the 24th June, on the subject of the conference between the Imperial Government and the Canadian Deputation, in which the advantages of union was discussed in its various aspects, and its absolute importance in a military point of view pointed out, and asserting the authority of the Imperial Government to urge upon the Province what they considered expedient for defence, and closing with the hope that, after a careful consideration of the subject, they would perceive the advantage of union.—What was the answer to that dispatch? What he condemned the Government for what that they did not clothe that answer to the communication to the Queen in gentlemanly, at least if not in elegant, language. He considered it also highly indecorous and unprecedented that, in a grave dispatch reference should have been made to a newspaper article. He would read it, and ask the House if it was not an insulting document. For himself, he wished to relieve himself of the odium of it. Nothing he had found, the Government had done had roused such a feeling in his own County. He had been met by people from all parts, who said to him during the last election: You must, on the hustings, refer to and denounce that minute of council.

Mr. Fisher quoted from the Minute of 12th July:

"From the language of this dispatch it would be natural to infer that it related to some scheme for effecting an entire legislative and administrative union of the United North American Provinces, which has not yet been made public; but words used in the concluding paragraph, taken in connection with various other circumstances, lead the Committee to conclude that it was intended to refer to the resolution in favor of a federation of the various Provinces of British North America, agreed to by the Canadian Parliament at its last Session. These resolutions have been submitted to the people of New Brunswick at the times and in the manner which the advocates of the scheme themselves selected."

Was there a boy in the Province, not a man of intelligence, or grave member of the House of Assembly, but a boy, who doubted what the dispatch of Mr. Cardwell, of the 24th June, referred to? Any person who wrote to him an answer to a courteous communication in the spirit of that Minute, he would put down as a low fellow.

Mr. Fisher criticised the Minute at length, characterising it as the most jesuitical dispatch ever penned in this Province—one of the most insulting minutes that ever crossed the water.

[At this point, Mr. Codlip said.—Mr. Cardwell had written an insulting and dictatorial letter to the Government, and that he would return an insulting answer to an insulting communication.]

Mr. Fisher drew his hon. friend to prove that; he defied him to point out any expression in the dispatch of June 24th that did not show the utmost courtesy, that did not bear the impress of the parental and solicitous care of the Imperial Government for the welfare and advantage of the Province. It bore out the very character of the Colonial Administration that had obtained under the rule of the Kings of England, and under the rule

of the Queen, who, more than any other monarch that had ever sat upon the throne, won the love and admiration of all her subjects. How could the House countenance such an insulting document? How justify such an answer to the communication of refined and educated men as were Her Majesty's Ministers? It would not be consistent with the honor and dignity of the House to do it.

Mr. Fisher quoted from another part of the Minute:—

"The Committee cannot suppose the British Government shares the ignorance of the history and character of the Federal scheme which pervades the British public, and which induces the *Times* newspaper of 24th June to observe that the two Canadas have put aside their ancient jealousies, and agreed to unite in a common Legislature, in apparent forgetfulness of the fact that they have so met for 20 or 25 years."

He (Mr. F.) had never heard anything like that before. He thought the country had occasion to know that the British Government knew better what was going on than we did ourselves. It was the people who wrote that paper—referring to the statements of a newspaper writer—that showed their ignorance. Was that a fair statement? Was the writer of the despatch conscious that the scheme proposed to restore to the Canadas their local institutions, and that in case of a failure to carry it out, its authors were pledged to restore to Upper and Lower Canada a great measure of the local independence surrendered in 1840.

He had referred to the Judicial appointments, and the evidence of an eminent legal gentleman on Judge Wilmet's ability as a lawyer, and said that the Government had weakened the administration of justice, and that a generation would pass away before the people would have the same confidence in it they had two months ago. He had referred to Judge Wilmet's two speeches on Confederation, and said that, surely, could not have been the cause of his rejection. It was nothing strange for a Judge to speak on the topics of the day. He had himself heard Judge Parker speak on a new School Law; he had referred to what Judge Coleridge had done in England.—He believed that the matter of the appointment of Judge Ritchie to the Chief Justice had been arranged a year ago. He had heard so much to that effect, that he believed it.

(Mr. Anglin.—How did the Government know that Judge Parker would die?)

Mr. Fisher.—They could not know that; but they knew that Sir James Carter would resign. He (Mr. F.) had made some observations with regard to the Militia, in answer to what the Government had said last year regarding their responsibility in regard to Militia matters, and showed four transactions, during the administration of Lord Granville, that had taken place in England 60 years ago, that the control of all military matters, formerly in the hands of the King, were vested in those of the Executive Council, with the proviso that no change in the government of the army should be carried out to effect without the knowledge and approbation of the King. It was the same in this Province, where the Constitution was a copy in miniature of that of the Imperial Constitution. The Governor acted with

and by the advice of his Council—responsible to the Queen, but his every act the act of his Government.

He would ask the House to condemn the Government because they had made no sufficient preparations for the defence of the country. He knew that they had a lot of men in camp during summer, but that effected nothing. What he complained of in the Government was that they had not spent the \$30,000 voted for militia purposes, and that had been wasted with little purpose on the Camp of Instruction, in making arrangements for drilling men over the Province. If they had worked out such an arrangement in the month of March, some preparation would have been made for the defence of the country. If the present crisis passed away without difficulty, they would at least have a body of drilled men at an expense little above the sum that had been thrown away, he must say, upon the Camp of Instruction. He never had thought there was much good in the militia heretofore, but the times were changed, and the people now demanded that there should be a proper system of defence. Had the country a Government according to the Constitution,—had there been, as the Constitution demanded, gentlemen on the spot to give advice, the people would not have been crying out. Proper provisions would have been made for drilling men all along the frontier, and the people would have had assurance that something was being done. The feeling in the country was the same as had animated the Province in 1812, and the men of the Province this day were as willing to make sacrifices and undergo hardships, if occasion demanded, as then. What the country had reason to complain of, what he called on the House to condemn the Government for was, they had filed in their duty to the country at this time. But he was not surprised that the Government had not done anything; nor surprised that they had been scattered to the four winds of Heaven. He was not astonished that they had not made an Auditor General; he did not wonder that they had not created a Solicitor General, because he occurred they did not know where they were themselves.

He would now speak on Confederation. He would much like to know where the Government were. He should soon know, for he had written to a gentleman in Canada who knew pretty much all that was going on; he should know before this debate closed what the Government were doing. This Government was formed on an Anti-Confederate basis—where were they now? We find that there was put in the Speech a paragraph about Confederation, and that involved a measure of Union to be submitted by them. A year ago, they argued that the country would be ruined by Confederation, and now they were ready to submit some scheme themselves. When Confederation was first mentioned in the Province, they found that opposition to it was a capital piece of political claptrap to hoist themselves into office. But where were they now? The Speech said that the Government were going to put forth a measure of Confederation. He would like to know some of the foreshadowings of that measure. He would like to know at what hour, what time of the day, in what particular place, they changed their minds, in order that they might hold on to office? But he could tell them they would not be allowed to hold on to office much longer.