

people there refuse to cast their lot with ours, after hearing the opinion the honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches have so frequently expressed of each other. And what will be the consequence if an attempt is made to coerce them? Why, they will be like the damsel who is forced to marry against her will, and who will, in the end, be most likely to elope with some one else. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) With the tricks which the gentlemen on the Treasury benches know so well to play, we will only hasten the day when the Lower Provinces will perhaps endeavor to withdraw from the Mother Country and seek another alliance. I resume my seat, sir, regretting the manner in which the Government have tried to stifle the full and free discussion of this great question. (Cheers.)

MR. COWAN—I cannot agree altogether, Mr. SPEAKER, with the honorable member for Cornwall as to the causes which led to the prosperity of this country from 1854 to 1858, nor yet with the picture he draws of our present circumstances. That hon. gentleman attributes our prosperity to the repeal of the Usury laws. I do not doubt but that the repeal of the Usury laws had some effect, but there were other causes which had much more to do in producing that prosperity than the repeal of the Usury laws. In the first place we imported money by the million to build our railways, and in the second place, not only had we abundant harvests, but short crops in other countries gave us fabulous prices for everything we raised. Instead of eighty or ninety cents, wheat was worth two dollars a bushel and upwards, with millers scouring the country with teams to carry it from the barn to the mill. Such a tide of prosperity, Mr. SPEAKER, never set in on any country; the result was that it unhinged the sober calculation of almost everybody, and we ran into debt individually, municipally, and provincially, as if pay-day had never been to come. Well-to-do farmers, with perhaps a thousand dollars or two in their pocket, thought they might purchase an adjoining farm, but it was well if they escaped with the loss of the money paid down. In many instances the homestead was sacrificed ere the new farm was paid for, while houses planned and built then have not yet received their furniture. But, Mr. SPEAKER, if our prosperity was unprecedented, so were our reverses. The commercial crisis of 1858 came on us when we were

almost without a crop. The disastrous frost of the 11th of June destroyed the one-half, if not three-fourths, of the fall wheat.—Spring wheat—all except the Fife sort, then but sown—was so blighted as in many instances not to be worth the cutting. And many a farmer was not only destitute of potatoes to eat, but had even to purchase his next year's seed. The only article from which numerous farmers got any return was surplus stock, which that season brought fair prices—lean as well as fat—in the American markets. But these reverses were not without a salutary effect. All speculation was instantly stopped. Farmers began to practice anew frugality and economy, and turned their attention to rearing stock as well as cereals. The consequence is that the country has in a great measure recovered from the shock of 1858, and, notwithstanding rather short crops and comparatively low prices, I cannot help thinking that the hon. member for Cornwall takes altogether too gloomy a view of the state of the country. But though I cannot coincide with the gloomy views of the member for Cornwall, neither can I accept the bright prospect of the member for South Wellington, as being descriptive of the agricultural interest, generally, throughout the province. It is all very well for my hon. friend, who resides in one of the most fertile counties in Canada, and whose farmers devote their attention to rearing stock—stock second to none in the province—to talk of agricultural prosperity. But in less favored sections it cannot be denied that there is much individual suffering, caused by the midge and the unprecedented drought of last summer. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. LAFRAMBOISE said—Mr. SPEAKER, when, a few nights ago, I had the honor to assert in this House that the Government would adopt every means to cause their scheme of Confederation to be passed without amendment, and would have recourse to motions of the nature of that which is engaging our attention at the present time, I certainly did not expect that my prediction would be so soon accomplished, and I acknowledge that I did not believe that it was so well founded as it has proved to be. What do we see, Mr. SPEAKER? We see an example of the most deplorably restrictive action which can possibly be displayed by a government. After delivering, to satiety, speeches lasting several hours, speeches to