

No such amendment has before been offered in this House.

THE HON. THE SPEAKER—The motion proposed in amendment to the main motion by Hon. Mr. CURRIE was in the following words:—"That in a matter of such great importance as the proposed Confederation of this and certain other British Colonies, this House is unwilling to assume the responsibility of assenting to a measure involving so many important considerations, without a further manifestation of the public will than has yet been declared." Now, the present motion is—"That His Excellency the Governor General be prayed to withhold the transmission of the said Address until the said resolutions shall have been approved of by the electors of this province, qualified to vote under the Act 22 Vic., cap. 6, to be signified by a direct vote on the said resolution, to be taken in the various municipalities throughout Upper and Lower Canada." Although there may be some similarity, still it is not substantially the same motion. (Hear, hear.) The "further manifestation of the public will" may be quite a different thing from the manifestation of that will by a direct vote, as provided for by this amendment. I believe, therefore, that the motion is in order; and, as in a case of this kind it is my opinion that a liberal interpretation of the rules and practice of the House should be made, I cannot declare that the amendment is included in the motion decided by the House yesterday. (Hear, hear.)

HON. MR. REESOR—It will have been observed that the course of this debate has taken a most extraordinary turn. At first, honorable members addressed the House in favor of the resolutions—members of the Government more especially, and then some honorable gentlemen supporting them; but latterly we have heard several honorable gentlemen expressing their views very strongly and emphatically against many of the resolutions embraced in the scheme of Confederation, but while expressing themselves so strongly, they seemed to feel it to be their duty to support it as a whole. (Hear, hear.) Now, it strikes me, and I trust it will strike some other honorable members, also, that we have been elected to this Legislature with a view to perfect as far as possible every scheme or proposition that may properly come before it. If we have views on a particular measure which would lead us to propose amendments for the purpose of making it different in shape or scope from what it is when first introduced, I maintain that it is our duty to express our

views in that direction—not taking the measure without looking fairly and impartially into it, or accepting it in the belief that we have no right to dispute or alter any portion of it. For my part, I look upon the scheme now before the House as upon the whole very different from what we had a right to expect from the members of the present Government. They have been strongly supported in both Houses of Parliament and in the country, and I do not desire to see any difficulty thrown in their way, or anything done calculated to lessen their support in the Legislature; but at the same time I do say that, with the support and confidence they have received, they ought to have brought forward a better scheme than that which they have presented to the House and country. Why, take the question of the Intercolonial Railroad involved in these resolutions, and what do we find? More than two years ago the governments of the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia made a proposition to the Canadian Government to build this road and pay seven-twelfths of the cost, Canada to pay the remaining five-twelfths. Well, what arrangement have we now—what has time brought about—what advantages have these two years gained for us? This, that the Government of Canada come down to the Legislature with a scheme according to which Canada will have to pay towards the construction of this road nine-twelfths of the entire amount, and the other provinces the balance—thus involving additional expense on the part of Canada to the amount of several millions of dollars—certainly not less than six millions to build the Intercolonial Railway alone—more than was demanded of us two years ago—and a total additional expenditure that will add to the annual taxation of Canada more than a million and a half of dollars for all time to come. This heavy expenditure over the proposition made two years ago has, therefore, been needlessly undertaken. It is admitted, even by the promoters of this scheme, that the eastern provinces will benefit far more largely than Canada by the construction of the Intercolonial Railway. It is admitted by the best commercial men who have spoken upon the subject, that as a commercial undertaking it will not pay. It is admitted that it will be of little or no value whatever as a defensive work. This being the case, why then rush into this large expenditure with such precipitancy; why not, at least, postpone its passage in order to get a measure of a more perfect character, and one more in harmony with the