

SPEECH

OF THE

HON. T. HEATH HAVILAND.

ON CONFEDERATION.

1866.

The following speech of the Hon. T. HEATH HAVILAND, was, owing to some oversight of the Reporter for the Session of 1866, omitted from the Parliamentary Reporter of that Session.

THURSDAY, 8th May, 1866.

Confederation Question.

House in Committee of the whole on Despatches, &c. Mr. John Yeo in the Chair.

HON. T. HEATH HAVILAND (Solicitor General) thought the hon. member from East Point (Hon. E. McEachern) in his attempt to draw an argument against the proposed or contemplated Confederation of the British American Provinces, from the history and results of the Union between England and Scotland, had been peculiarly unfortunate. That hon. gentleman seemed to have inherited all the ancient animosity of his blood and race to the power and domination of the Saxon; and, altogether ignoring the happy change for his country, which, in the course of time, had been brought about by that Union—a change from discord to friendship, from war to peace, and from poverty and distress to national prosperity,—in attempting to strengthen his anti-confederate position by reference to it, he seemed to be animated solely by the recollection of what, in truth, was considered by the great majority of the people of Scotland, at that crisis of her fate, to be an annihilation of her independence, a loss and a disgrace, and a surrendering of her rank among nations; for no advantages which could be anticipated, except such as might be obtained by private individuals, whose hopes of self-aggrandizement and pecuniary gains completely stifled in their breast every consideration of national honor. Such views as these, with reference to the contemplated Confederation under consideration, appeared to be entertained, not only by the hon. member from East Point (Hon. E. McEachern) but, indeed, by almost every other anti-confederate in the Island. The cry raised by our anti-confederates in general was, that by Confederation, we would be deprived at once of all the consideration and advantages of a resident and independent government; and for the prospect and

benefits of free trade and extended commerce, which were held out to lure us into the connection, all we would realize, would be increase of taxation burdens, and duties, wholly ruinous to our prosperity, and that altogether for the relief and benefit of Canada. The only advantages, it was, most unjustly and ungenerously, said by anti-confederates, which would result to Prince Edward Island, from her being included in the contemplated Confederation, would be experienced by a few of her politicians who, for the rewards of venality, had agreed to barter away their own honor and the rights and liberties of their country. By those who thus, perversely, and he might say dishonestly, argued, it was most carefully kept out of sight that, according to the proposed scheme of Confederation, there would be no degradation of any of the Provincial Legislatures and Governments. These, on the contrary, would be preserved intact; and each Province would retain the entire control and management of its own local and internal affairs. It was true, indeed, that the general Government would, undoubtedly, and of necessity, exercise supervision of the individual States; but the power of the Federal Government to interfere with the exclusively internal affairs of any of the Confederated Provinces, would be of the most limited and inconsiderable character. In all the arguments brought to bear against Confederation, it was also very carefully kept out of view that its accomplishment, upon terms fair and just to every section of it—and upon no other terms did he wish, or had he ever desired, to see it established—would not only be the means of happily extinguishing those little wispish political feuds and jealousies which had so long acted as a drag upon our progress, and been a disgrace to us as a people; but would also, by putting the impost duties and other sources of public revenue, upon a uniform basis, under the control of the Federal Government, put an end to the anomaly of separate customs establishments, and the conflicting and perplexing commercial regulations which existed, and which had almost of necessity arisen out of the disunited state of these Provinces. Again, the recognition of another benefit which would result from a Union of these Provinces, had been carefully eschewed by our Island anti-confederates: he meant identity of laws, and uniformity in the modes of their administration. Tho