

Mr. TALBOT approved of the amendment which had been put forward by the hon. member, Mr. Hogsett. It stated what was perfectly correct. Now the speech of his Excellency the Governor had been viewed in different lights. Some hon. members had praised it with no light praise, others had criticised it severely. So if he (Mr. T.) took middle course, he thought he would be near the mark. It was by no means an extraordinary speech; but it was not wholly destitute of matters of considerable interest. It was one of those kind of speeches usually delivered at the opening of each session of this House, fairly written, and fairly delivered. But in important matters there was an almost entire absence of decision, of a clearly defined policy; which we all must regard as not very complimentary to this House. A speech from the throne was always supposed to define a specific policy. Now in this speech there were references made to certain matters properly enough; but there was no course of policy defined for the Government to pursue. Now when the present Government came into power, a speech somewhat similar to the present one had been addressed to this Assembly; and in that the Government did think it necessary to say what they intended to do, in order to restore the country from its deplorable condition, and to moving it forward in the career of improvement. The policy then put forth was the encouragement and improvement of Agriculture; and in substance of that a Bill was introduced and passed, having that end for its object, as well as the reduction of pauperism. At the time this measure was under discussion, he (Mr. T.) had given it as his opinion that it would be productive of no good. Well, the Bill was passed, came into operation, and we now find that it has been powerless to effect those results which the Government predicted, but which were never anticipated by this side of the House. Pauperism, so far from receding, had advanced; so far from being checked, it had been accelerated; so that our present position was really worse than when this great curative measure was so triumphantly ushered in. Now that was one point which should be distinctly remembered. In that policy, then, Government had failed. Well, if we judge them by their failures, we cannot have much hope for their capacity to do any good. We had watched carefully their proceedings, and we had watched the operation and working of this measure with peculiar caution. He (Mr. T.) had taken the Government at its word. They said they were the greatest men in the country. He said granted. They said they would accomplish what had never been done before. He said granted. They said they possessed the collective wisdom of the country. He said granted. The said they were the Goliaths of this Colonial Parliament. He said granted. They said they were the only representatives of the public. He said granted. They said they would never fail. He said doubtful. Well, all their sayings had come to nothing, and his doubts had been verified. They were evidently impressed with the belief that it was impossible for any body of men to rule this country; because they would not and could not confess their own inability to do it, their own inability to grapple with the difficulties that surrounded them. They would doubtless assert that because they failed, it was impossible for others to succeed. Now what had they tried to do? Their first essay was to destroy pauperism; and how did they try to effect that purpose? By saying to a pauper go into the woods and clear land, and for the first acre you clear will give you \$8, and for every one after the first, \$6. This they said to a man without any means at his control, without being able to buy a loaf of bread, a pick-axe to work with, or the means to erect a dwelling to live in. At the time it was proposed he (Mr. T.) said it was impossible to succeed, as it was, that the Government must surely mean to do something more, must give them roads, must try to sustain them, or if not, we are only mortifying the miseries of the poor. Well, the Bill had become, as he (Mr. T.) anticipated, a perfect failure. But did they do anything else? Having failed in this instance, did they look around and see if they could devise any means that would be beneficial? Did they encourage those who had cultivated the land, but who, from poverty, were unable to work it? There were hundreds of acres of cultivated land which has been lying idle for years. Did they woo the people to recover it from its present wilderness state, and make their support dependent upon the culture of the soil? No. You made them believe they would get their support from you, and thus you degraded them. Pauperism increased, and pauper relief expenditure increased. No effort was made to check it until the eleventh hour. He contended that when the Government desired to check this system, they should have done so by degrees, and not at one full bound. It would appear that the Premier felt his embarrassed situation, and his inability to stem the tide of corruption and malversation of the public funds. His only desire was to save himself, protect, if possible, his Government, and depend on luck for the result. The monster pauperism was not to be killed out by one blow; but was to be gradually weakened. Then there was another evil quite sufficient to crush the country if itself increased taxation. Their reasoning in support of that was that they could not support the people without placing additional burdens upon their backs. Your burdens, say they, are heavy, but we'll cure them by putting on heavier ones. Now, would any one say that these two measures were calculated to benefit the country, though they were put forward for that purpose? They either did it for an evil purpose, or else because they were unable to rule the country. We are told that this increase of taxation was inevitable, and had been universally approved of by the country. Here the hon. member referred at length to the late election at Harbor Grace, and contended that the question of Confederation had never been put to the people, who were perfectly indifferent whom they returned this session, knowing that the question would come before them for final decision at the general election. The fact that only one half of the electors voted, proved this. Then

we had a new policy ushered in, the all abounding one of Confederation. That was the policy that was shadowed forth in his Excellency's speech, two years ago, and every hon. member was aware of what then occurred. A paragraph had been smuggled into the address, which it was afterwards alleged affirmed the principle of Confederation. Hon. members who had voted for it were in a state of great excitement. They solemnly repudiated in this House that they had intended to affirm any such principle. They declared that they were opposed to Confederation on any terms. How then could so change their minds without any reason, he (Mr. P.) was a loss to imagine. We are surrounded by the same circumstances now as we were then. Yet we are told that those who had before expressed their opinion to be that no circumstances would justify Union with Canada, are now most anxious that very Union should be accomplished. It was said, but he (Mr. P.) did not know whether it was true or not, that the Government feel they are in such a position that they cannot retreat themselves. They are in such a condition of governmental misery, that they cannot retrieve their position, and rather than give way, rather than permit other men to seize the helm, they would abandon the country and let it drift into a Union with Canada, provided only, that they should drift with it, and have the iron chest still with them. Next session, that was the last session, they had another speech, and it was remarkable that the policies of the two former sessions were dropped, and the third policy was a policy of taxation. We were told that the country was in a very bad state, Agriculture had effected no good. Confederation was scouted, and Taxation only remained—and certainly taxes were piled on. It was said this was really a policy, and that its object was to prove to the country that it would not be worse off by going into Confederation. One objection made to Confederation was that the Canadian Tariff was very high, and the policy was to make the tariff of the country as high as that of Canada, and that's remove that objection, and, as it proved, hon. gentlemen opposite swallowed the bait. Did it strike them that though the Tariff of the country may be pretty much as is the Canadian Tariff, if we should be confederated it will be kept as its present rate, if not made higher, and we will have lost all control over it. It may be asked how can we lessen it now? It never appears to strike hon. gentlemen that the expenditure could be brought down a little. When it was proposed to increase taxation, the hon. gentlemen on his (Mr. T.'s) side of the House suggested a reduction of the expenditure instead, but they were not listened to. In their simplicity they thought that by reducing the expenditure they would be able to avoid increased taxation, and do many things which would tend to advance the interests of the country and the comfort of the people. They fancied that it would be well to act as honest individuals surrounded by financial difficulties would do, that is to retrench and live in a less luxurious and expensive style, and thus by making income and expenditure square, get rid of difficulties and be independent. This is the fourth session, and they had again the old policy of the second session, and were asked to adopt Confederation, as that is the only thing which would improve the condition of the country. Of course they would have that question before them bye and bye. He (Mr. T.) was of opinion, and he thought the country was of the same, that the only thing required was retrenchment. The public believed that the expenses are excessive, and that some £20,000 or £30,000 a year, might easily be saved, and applied for the public benefit. Men in office, such a saving would be worth nothing, that it would not give sixpence all round, and what good would that effect? Why it would give from £100,000 to £120,000 in four years, and in a small constituency like this, if such a sum were judiciously and properly expended, there need not be a poor man in the country. The people were now in a transition state, from the time in which the fisheries were able to support them for the whole year round, to the time when they do not give sufficient for their support during the summer. If that £100,000 were available now, it would be sufficient to take them over their difficulties, and establish them in a course of industry which would render them prosperous and happy. He (Mr. T.) believed that this saving might be accomplished, at all events, it was worth trying, and if it failed, if being judiciously applied it did not tide the people over their difficulties, if it did not help to aid the fishermen in establishing agricultural pursuits to aid the fisheries, then let us have Confederation or anything else. Before you take a step which will plunge you into irretrievable Union, try it. It is better than parting with your liberty, your property, and possibly with your lives. It was not because people were surrounded by poverty that they should part with their liberties and rights, and link themselves to another country which had no sympathy with them. No country was so discordant as Canada, which was made up of so many antagonistic elements and races. He (Mr. T.) said it would be wise to pause and try all feasible means before surrendering themselves in that way. The question just before the House was that of the French Shore rights. He had heard it said by some one on the Government benches, that we had gained a great privilege. He could not see it in that light, or that they were one but better off. The treaties remained exactly as they were. How then was it possible to say that they were better off or had more privileges than before? No conclusion had yet been come to, so things remained as they were last year, and ever since the treaties were made. The Government blundered most tremendously when they refused licenses two years ago. The same treaties existed then as now. No final determination had been arrived at by the Convention. Who refused the licenses? The Government did, because directed to do so by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. But he need not have directed them at all, for the treaties were there to refer to. When the Secretary said they could not grant the licenses, why did not the Government say they intended to do so without infringing on the fishery rights of the French? They did not do so, and so neglected their duty. Now, when his Excellency went home and said so, the Secretary replied, On you may do that of course; it was never intended that you should not do as you please with the land; and we have the Government glorifying themselves on the fact that they have repaired their own blunder. It was a great privilege to be allowed to search on the land, and be at the same time told you must not erect buildings on the French Shore. Where was the service due, or what was precisely due to the Governor? I proposed amendment simply embodied that, which he (Mr. T.) had said. The trustees were the difficulty, and they were still in existence. He felt much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Mr. FROWE—The hon. member for St. John's West had just given them a dissertation on the art of Government, but had been very reticent on

the political moves of the opposition. The paragraph before the chair related to the French Shore question, and to it the opposition proposed an amendment. Regarding the question, an important move had been made last session, inaugurated by the hon. and learned leader of the opposition, who prepared a series of resolutions, moved the House into Committee, and not only got his resolutions passed, but had petitioned to the Queen, the Lords and the Commons prepared, written in the very best text on the finest of parchment. Not content with all this the hon. and learned gentleman personally superintended the preparation of the tin case to carry home these important documents. As first presented the resolutions were such as it would not be creditable to the House to permit to be seen outside. But all lent a hand, and they were licking it into shape, and yet all the credit of the whole affair, the box and all, devolved on the hon. and learned mover. The amendment now proposed was a natural addition to the resolution of last session. Other men, Government, and Legislatures had tried their hand at the affair, but had not advanced it one bit; but when the hon. and learned gentleman took it up of course, it was to be settled right off. Of course, then, it was quite natural there should be a wail of lamentation when, after all this exertion, the result was nothing at all. It reminded him (Mr. P.) of the question put by Mr. Jefferson Brush to Martin Chuzzlewit, as to which of his articles produced the greatest sensation in the Court of St. James's. So with the hon. gentlemen opposite, they were quite surprised that their great resolutions produced no effect. He (Mr. P.) wanted to know who wrote that amendment. It could not be the hon. member for Ferryland, for he would make it shorter and more succinct. The British Government not only take no notice of the tin box resolutions and petitions, but they dare to approve of Lord Carnarvon's policy. Why, it was a *cassis belli*, and he (Mr. P.) were in opposition; he would be for annexation after that. It was a pity, such a grand move should turn out a *fiasco*. There was another great movement yet to be made. It had been two nights hatching, and though they tried to shroud it in mystery, they could not keep it quiet, but let it out. He could not then go into the question of what that movement was to be. One thing struck him (Mr. P.) after listening to the long speeches of hon. members opposite. It was, what an uncommonly good Government we have, when gentlemen blessed with such lungs can find nothing to say against it. Seed potatoes had been the stock subject of the hon. and learned member for Harbor Main, but he had changed his tactics to suit those of the new leader, who did not approve of the proclamation. That proclamation had produced, and would produce, good results, and the Government intended carrying it out to its final end. If hon. gentlemen in opposition had the good of the country at heart, they would return to their former straightforward course respecting the proclamation.

Mr. RENOUF.—No doubt that was a grand display of eloquence and statesmanlike ability to which they had just listened from Daniel Woodley Prowse, the wooden-headed representative of the woolen-headed constituency of Burgeo and La Poile. Goodness help the Government when he was their best man. It was laughable, in the extreme, to hear him talk of the hon. and learned member for Harbor Main, Mr. Hogsett, a man who enjoyed the confidence of the public of the country North, South, East and West. He (Mr. R.) regretted that, whilst the hon. and learned member, Mr. Hogsett, was packing up these tin cases, he did not pack up the hon. and learned member for Burgeo and La Poile in them. If he had been thus packed off it would have rid the House of a great nuisance. As for the amendment, he (Mr. R.) held the same opinion as did his colleague, that the matter stood in the same position as it did before the resolutions and addresses were sent home. They had been told that applicants for grants had received them, and were prepared to go to work under the conditions contained in these grants. To his (Mr. R.'s) mind they had no security, there was nothing before them to conclude that the matter was so satisfactorily settled as to allay all anxiety on the part of those who had discovered minerals on that part of the island. They were told that a great deal had been accomplished, and in the same breath that the matter was still under discussion. The subject was now receiving the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and whilst the policy of Lord Carnarvon is to be upheld, licenses to search are to be issued. He (Mr. R.) contended that a grant to work mines could be of no value without a right to the use of the strand. A few years ago private individuals in the course of their explorations discovered valuable marbles and other things. They then went to England to endeavor to induce capitalists to invest. The first inquiry made was as to their title, and although they were fully satisfied of the great value of the minerals discovered, yet there being no secure title, the capitalists refused to invest. The question in fact remained as it was two years ago. For the sake of argument, let us assume that a grant has been issued. He to whom the grant was made discovers minerals, he commences operations, develops a valuable mine, and has a number of people employed, he requires means of shipment, and has to bring his minerals three or four miles to the strand, when arrived there some Frenchman comes and says you are interfering with my fishery rights, and although that may be said merely for the sake of annoyance, he has to remove to one side or the other; and so soon is he settled in the place to which he removed, than another Frenchman comes and again says that he is interfering. Oh what use, then, were these licenses, when any single fisherman might object to any erection being made? We are aware that we, of ourselves, can do nothing, that the Imperial Government would never quarrel with France for us, and that if we were confederated the voice of four millions of

people would not effect what we cannot. Any one who read the debates upon this question in the Imperial Parliament must be struck with the entire ignorance of the subject evinced by those who took a part in that debate. We actually found a Minister of the Crown saying that there should be mutual concessions, that we should concede to the French the right of fishing all along our coast. Did not that show the Imperial authorities knew nothing at all about the matter? He considered that it was a first subject of complaint that when we sent petitions to the Imperial Government, we should receive no reply—if he knew that it was the usual course to send a reply in such cases; and upon a matter of such vital importance, thought it was right for us to express our views as contained in the amendment.

The original motion was then put and carried, on a division;

The Committee then rose and reported progress. To sit again on Thursday.

The House adjourned till Thursday at 3 o'clock.

THURSDAY, Feb. 11.

The House met at 3 o'clock, pursuant to adjournment.

On motion of Mr. GODDEN, the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole, on the further consideration of the Address in reply to the speech of His Excellency, Mr. KNIGHT in the Chair.

On motion of Mr. GODDEN, the fifth section of the address was read as follows:

"We fully concur with your Excellency that the time has now arrived for us to take action on the great question of Confederation; and we can assure your Excellency that we shall give our earnest attention to the consideration of our Union with the Dominion of Canada, on such fair and equitable terms as may be calculated to serve the interests of the Colony, be approved of by the Government of the Dominion, and which we trust may prove acceptable to all classes of the people, when submitted to the constituencies, and also receive the final approval and ratification of His Majesty."

Mr. TALBOT did not understand the section which had just been read, and thought it was involved in a good deal of mystery. It was very desirable that such a matter should not be misunderstood. He did not agree that the time had arrived, and did not think it was well to say so. It is said that the time has arrived, it must have reference to something previous to the fact that it was stated that action would be taken at some future time, which time had now arrived. But he (Mr. T.) was not aware that such had ever been said. If he understood the assurance of the hon. and learned Attorney General, no time could arrive to this present House, for the matter was, in the first place, to be referred to the people, who were to be asked if they approved of this Union. It had not been put before the people in that light, or in any way beyond that general statement which was given by candidates, who in fact bound themselves to nothing, and led people to believe that it was a mere question spoken of and canvassed speculatively. If this section be adopted, it would appear to him, assert that which was not true. The elections were approaching, and so it might be said that the time had come when the people should be asked if they approved of the principle. After that the House could meet and state certain conditions, and these conditions could be again referred to the people, he thought that would be the proper way to act, or at least that it would be in accordance with the general understanding of the hon. and learned Attorney General's promise. If this paragraph be passed, it will be an agreement for the consideration of the conditions, which would be a strong presumption of a previous affirmation of the principle. The wording of the paragraph was not clear, and if it be intended that the House should affirm the principle, it ought to be so expressed in clear and definite language. Two years ago, the Government attempted by a clause in the address to affirm the principle, but if the House refused, after some consideration and difficulty, amongst hon. gentlemen opposite, the clause was withdrawn, and one of a doubtful character substituted. After that it was said the substituted clause affirmed the principle, and the present Judge Hayward, who then represented Harbor Grace, made a great row about it, and said that he for one did not intend to affirm the principle at all. Was the House now asked to affirm that principle? If we look at this paragraph, and ask if such be the case, we are met by a confusion of words which neither says yes nor no. It certainly implies an affirmation of the principle. That was an advance towards its affirmation. We agree it is time to take action. What was the first act? None hitherto, but now we concur that it is time to take action. The first step should be to affirm the principle, and until that is done, details and conditions cannot be considered. Why not say distinctly that the time had come for the affirmation of the principle and consideration of details? The section implied that affirmation, but in so doubtful a manner that it did not meet his (Mr. T.'s) approval, and he would be very sorry to vote for it. There is a loophole left here for the supporters of the Government, by which they may be caught by the neck, and bound as they pass through. They are now asked to wade about like jin crowns, and say to-day what they refused to say two years ago. That was not treating them properly. Their attention should be directed to the precise point, and they should not be asked to proceed with their eyes bandaged. For himself, he (Mr. T.) did not affirm the principle at all. From all he had reflected upon it and seen of it, he was decidedly opposed to the principle, and did not think Union would, under all its circumstances, prove beneficial, and they then knew what Union meant, and under what leading principles they must go in. If the Union had not taken place, if it were still in embryo, and they did not see it working, there might be a doubt as to whether the principle was good or not. But now that the Union was established, the question was—is the principle of that Union such as they could approve of? He (Mr. T.) said it was not. No matter what terms you propose, they cannot deviate from the essential principles on which the Colonies are already united, and he (Mr. T.) did not approve of those principles, and did not see what advantage such a Union could be to the country. It would not make us better off, because from the nature of things, it was impossible it could. What was the meaning of this Confederation? Remove all the glare and glitter, and what was its naked meaning? Just this, that by our own act we give to Canada absolute power and control over our destinies, over our liberties, and properties and our lives. That is the exact meaning of Confederation. Turn over what you have about it, put it in all the glittering colors you choose, but take it is reality, and that is what it means. He said liberties, because after the Union was established, they would have no liberty to rule themselves, and could make no laws without the assent

of the Dominion; property of the Dominion Parliament could tax and externally, to any amount the people could when they pleased and use their lives for purposes. Such was Confederation a very nice thing to congratulate but he (Mr. T.) did not think the content with it. Was it wise or not to give up their right to legislate for their property at the mercy of a foreign tax as they pleased, to submit that also, so that they might seize and from 18 to 60 years of age, to be imposed upon them by the great Republic, the dust will be raised and the people they would be told that though we are right, we are balance all this; that new changes be opened, and the country raised civilization, that agriculture will and bloom in all the luxuriance of other Provinces. He (Mr. T.) could stand how Confederation was going this, and did not believe that the themselves really understood it Canada bind herself on your part to promote our commerce, agricultures? No, she could not do it. The law is already passed; Confirmed, and she cannot give more already arranged amongst these arguments advanced to prove the Confederation had reference to Commerce and arrangements, and had not with the political aspect of the questions to be benefited by an equal arrangement by some Commercial arrangement mines were to be worked, but it would be capitalists and not by politicians; a work them; not because we were but because they would be profited said that if we confederate we will flour, pork, &c., free of duty. That is an argument. It certainly was all these arguments the political mixed up with commercial matter question was blotted so as to three eyes of the people. These articles duty free by commercial regulation, federation. Such was the case before it not to be so again? He (Mr. T.) show the knick by which the support keep the political question in the background a very different matter, question of commercial arrangements very strange to me, but perhaps it was innocent and not up to the tricksterly wisdom which sometimes mixed up in the question of Politically, Confederation meant only should have the absolute control of property and the lives of the people challenged a denial of that. It what Confederation meant, then be of its meaning. He (Mr. T.) could though. We must, it seemed, without it get on at all. A crippled state that unless some comes, and in mercy picks us up, we cannot exist by ourselves. But these hon. gentlemen go on the nation and fish and thunder above. They can't walk upon terra firma people. If we ourselves by a Government cannot make the people surely no Government on this side do it. When the Imperial Government affairs of the colony we well remember to blunder. The general cry understand us. With self Government we possessed everything necessary to flourish. There are now some gentlemen ought to have another kick up history of this Confederation! The were fighting and squabbling among in order to keep them quiet they were then was the first of Confederation a considerable Annexation party and the shindy, not to say a rebellion, which quickly quelled. In the United Parishes were equally divided and innumerable occurred. That Confederation failed a few years ago the leading men of both parts the happy thought that if they could Provinces to join them that they might make laws for them, they themselves very well. But all this time they never Newfoundland could be benefited by. At last they met at Quebec, and the General, the present Sir Hugh W. Holley to travelling in Canada at the time, perhaps we would send up a couple of what they were doing there. The Canadians said they never thought of Newfoundland but they would be very happy to meet. And so, without the appointment of the hon. Attorney General and the hon. sent up merely to watch the proceedings. He (Mr. T.) would not go proceedings of that Convention, he would champagne bottles, and the various fêtes they were invited, but the conclusion was that his two hon. friends were supported by these clever Canadians and others in the document which was the basis of Confederation. Well, these hon. gentlemen came back that they had done something of which reason to be proud. There was no freedom on their return, no freedom, no awaiting them to exhibit these two wondrous gaze of their countenances came to this house and they endeavoured over to their views every man of full country! They represented the thing colours, they declaimed that it was thing for the country which could be