

# The Newfoundlandander.

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## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

THURSDAY, Feb. 1

[CONTINUED.]

HON. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—No new offices had been created by his Government, but many hundreds of pounds of the civil expenditure had been saved. The civil list now with what it had been at the commencement of Responsible government, and it would be found to be lower in the number and amount of official incomes. Hon. members say why don't the Government do this, though in all parts of the world employment was given to the people without any demand being made on the Government? In Spain, where a revolution had just taken place, the first act of the patriots who led it was to decree that the corrupt system pursued by former Spanish Governments, of giving employment to the people on public works, instead of inciting private enterprise, should cease. He (hon. A G) said that when this country united with the Dominion, and had the benefit of free trade, and a uniform tariff and currency, it must tend to increase that commercial prosperity on which so much of the future of this country depends. Was a small country like this, with such a

restricted trade as it has, likely to create large commercial relations with any other country? Was it likely to have they advantages of reciprocity? Did hon. gentlemen suppose that Great Britain would enter into a treaty for Newfoundland alone, or that Canada would do it for her, when she did not form part of the Dominion? If then, Newfoundland stays out, and the Dominion enters into a new Reciprocity Treaty, will not Nova Scotia have all the advantages which will flow from the fish trade? If Canada should impose a duty on our articles of export, would it not place us in a worse position? And, if we do not join her she, must treat as she would any foreign power. With every possible encouragement given to the cultivation of the soil, it was found that the people were, but very little better off than before. Under the Act for the encouragement of Agriculture, some \$2000 had been paid, and within three or four years free grants for cleson on 9000 acres had been issued, and yet notwithstanding all this cultivation, the people did not appear any better off. There was a gentleman who took a great deal of interest in the affairs of the colony, who had lately written a great deal in the papers, and was well known as one of the strongest anti-confederate in the country. (hon. A G) had a high regard for that gentleman, and would be sorry to say anything disrespectful of him, when he asked that gentleman what it was that would be of benefit to the country, he replied that it lay with the Government, and on being asked in what respect, replied "to propose an arrangement or the pro-ecution of the fisheries, that there was no  
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aw to regulate it, and that without such a law the country could not prosper. He was then asked "what regulation he would propose," and replied that "codnets, codseines and buoys should be abolished and the people made to go on with the hook and line. Now he (Hon. A. G.) would ask if it was at all likely the people would agree to such a proposal? Those who had seines and nets would be opposed by those who had not, and vice versa, in fact no unanimity would be found to exist. The journals of the House were loaded with evidences, taken upon very great subject, yet it would be found that scarcely two parties were agreed in their views on it. Under such circumstances, how was it possible for the Government to propose any measure on the subject? One would imagine that the use of these articles, was confined to this country, but such was

was confined to this country, but such was not the case, for they were also used in England, Norway and other countries; and further, it was found that where laws for the regulation of the fisheries had been framed, they were since repealed. He (hon A G) put that forward as the course of action suggested to the Government by that gentleman, but it was evident to all that such a course could not be pursued with any hope of success. If cheap Government be what is wished for, there was no more likely way of obtaining it than by joining the Confederacy. If we do, then instead of our Legislature costing us it does some \$24,000 a year, it need not cost more than \$6000, and then in that one item alone \$18,000 a year might be saved. Further, instead of having our present expenses and difficulties in raising a revenue, we would have one more certain than that which was not raised, and our labors need not extend beyond its appropriation. This might be considered as going into the terms, but he merely mentioned it incidentally, so that hon

members who spoke of reduction of expenditure might see that all they could effect now would not equal what could easily be done under the new system. He feared he was taking the matter up too seriously, and speaking on it in a way which hon. gentlemen opposite did not expect. Their desire evidently was that it should be taken up in a semi-comic way, as had been done by the hon. member. Mr.

Talbot, who sung a good song and endeavoured to laugh it all out. He (hon A G) had not heard anything advanced by the other side which one could

well lay hold of to answer. All that was said was about as substantial as the wind that whistles by a man's ears. The hon member had played round and

about the matter, but had carefully avoided touching it just, as if he desired to lead people off the true scent. He was uncommonly adroit, and had played his part well, and if he did make a hit now and then, did it in a most inconspicuous way. The hon. gentleman had however made some mistaken statements. For instance; he said the Quebec Resolutions had been rejected. Now such was not the case. For in 1865 the present Chief Justice, then the leader of the Government, carefully avoided introducing the Quebec Resolutions, and said that as they were not agreed among themselves in the other provinces, and moreover, as the general elections were near at hand, it would be

the principle and the hon. member, Mr. Shea, charged them with being so. The Government did not adopt the principle and no hon. member went to the country on it, by none was it made a falling point at the hustings. What is Confederation? It means the giving up of that control over our own affairs which we now enjoy. Can we say that the people of the country have come to the determination of doing that. Could he (Mr. H.) or any other hon. member say that their constituents had come to the conclusion that they were willing to give up the constitution which they now had and hand their rights over to any other power? Can they possibly come to that conclusion before the matter is put fairly before them? Is it because the country was in a condition of temporary misery, and things were not as they used to be, that we should sell that for which we had so long fought? Was it because some difficulties were on us we should "fly from the ills we have to those we know not of?" They had fought for responsible Government, which meant self-government, and is it because they found a little difficulty in working it out and looked more after their own interests than after those of the country? Hence that institution which was the boast of every British subject, and which made the British people what they are, was to be given up and handed over to the Canadians. It may be that the country had not derived such great advantages from Responsible Government as was expected, but would any intelligent man be content to give it up and go back to the days of that Government which was only responsible to the Imperial authorities. There was no nation nor any race of men without its difficulties, but were they on that account to take their hats in their hands and go and beg of any other nation to do their bidding? The question is, what would become of the Canadian people if they submitted to such a condition? What would become of the Canadian Government? What would become of the Canadian Constitution? What would become of the Canadian people? What would become of the Canadian Government? What would become of the Canadian Constitution? What would become of the Canadian people?

other country to take them under their protection? If when the people of the country thoroughly understood the question, they would say, they were content to yield up their rights, then he (Mr. F.) would deal with the terms. He was not afraid to say that his mind had undergone various changes on this subject. Every mind which viewed it calmly must have these changes, for it was a grave question, one which involved the rights and liberties of the country. He as well as others might have been caught with the glare and

Mr. PRESENT could not conceive anything clearer or more explicit than the language of the address. [Here it was unanimously declared that whatever action might be taken by hon. members would not necessarily bind their constituents. Hon. members appeared as representatives, to stand or fall by the views which they might now express. It rejected by their constituents, no harm can possibly be done to the people, for this action is altogether preliminary; and by no means binding upon the country. What then was the amendment which hon. members opposite opposed to this reply? [Here the hon. member read the amendment.]

[The following was read at the close of it, there appeared a full

glitter of the state, that they were about to become part of a great nation. But were they to form part of a great nation. He (Mr. H.) was inclined to think so once, but when he found that the Imperial Government interfered with the action of the Parliament of the Dominion, he concluded that the Imperial Government had its paw on them as well as on the smallest of its colonies. Even with our own modicum of liberty, could we not if uncontrollled raise a revenue which the people would not feel. There was money every day leaving our shores which was not taxed, and which was received by persons who did not contribute one cent towards the improvement of the town. No, all these taxes were left to fall on the unfortunate tenant, who had to pay the taxes from the sweat of his labour. We tried to tax those absents but were prevented and told we could not, because they paid taxes at the other side. We were told the Dominion Government would help us in this respect.—Don't they know that the important question of the French Shore was pending, and have they shown any desire to assist us? They are a mere Colony, subject to the veto of the Colonial office and to that official blundering which has done so much to retard Colonial progress, to the ignorance of men who apply antiquated principles to the circumstances of the present day. Though we were told that the Dominion would be ruled over by a Prince of the blood, and that it would have the control of its own affairs, it is to-day as much in leading strings as it was twenty years ago. If Newfoundland then, were to become a part of the Dominion, it would be doubly subservient, not only to the imperial interests, but also to the veto of the Dominion itself. Why should our poverty be assigned as a reason for driving us into Confederation? Had the Canadians ever made us an offer? Was it in the power of Canada to relieve the Colony? Supposing the Dominion to be a success, would they undertake to feed our starving people? No, but they point us to the glories of the future, to that day when they will be a great nation, and why, on the very face of it, there appeared a fatal inconsistency. Hon. members assert that the Quebec Resolutions have been rejected by the people, and in the next breath tell us that the people have never had the matter submitted to them. Now either the question has been submitted to the people or it has not. If it has been submitted to them, the best proof of its acceptance is the overwhelming majority which here support it. If it had not been submitted to the people, then the statement that they have rejected the principle must necessarily be false. We had been told that the Quebec Resolutions had been condemned. As a matter of fact, exception has been taken to them, but there are many who would accept Confederation on these terms, rather than not have it at all. Mr. (Mr. P.) did not, however, go so far as that. He had frequently taken exception to some of the terms. The hon. member, Mr. Talbot, says "Let us ask the people if under certain circumstances they will accept this change." That was the very course which by this address the House was asked to pursue. How can we otherwise arrive at the conditions of Confederation upon which we are to go to the people? No two members have precisely the same views upon the subject; and it is evident that we must have some broad and unmistakable platform upon which to take our stand. We had been told that the Canadians would have complete control over our properties, our liberties and our lives. Now hon. members must recollect that Confederation once accomplished, we shall all become Canadians, and Canada cannot injure us without an equal, nay a larger amount of injury to herself. What have we to dread with regard to our property? A law to affect us must necessarily affect the other provinces, and was it to be supposed that they would enterprise any suicidal policy, that they would legislate to the injury of their property, which is so infinitely superior to ours? How were our liberties, then, to be affected? Let us see first what we understand by the expression. The culminating point of our liberties appeared to be the power of returning a certain number of representatives to this Assembly. This consummation of liberty was certainly not a subject for any great congratulation; and when hon. gentlemen opposite considered that the people had returned to office men so unworthy as the present Ministry, they surely must consider the liberty as of very small account. How, then,

able to meet the world in arms? Can our people afford to live on that glorious vista? Will not the hon. Attorney General admit that the nationality of the Dominion is a purely speculative question? Why did the United States purchase Russian America? Simply because she is drawing her lines closely around British interests on this side the Atlantic. What guarantee could be given that the Dominion would exist, with the power of the American Republic on the other side? Great Britain is reducing her war estimates by a million pounds. She will constrain the Colonies to defend themselves. What possible chance could these Colonies have of defending themselves against the formidable power of the United States? The hon. Attorney General had said that the tariff of the Dominion would be equalised. Surely the hon. gentleman was aware that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are fully two centuries ahead of us, and a tariff which would be suitable for them would press very heavily on us. Thus they might be able to contribute to the expense of an Army and Navy, Newfoundland would be powerless to do so. It is true, that in relation to our means, we have contributed more wealth to Britain than any Colony on this side the Atlantic; and yet we cannot obtain our dear territorial rights, through the ignorant interference of British officials. And could it be doubted that if we should join the Dominion they would be as powerless to secure our rights as we ourselves are to-day? The hon. member, Mr. Shea, said, in a former speech of his, "but a pregnant question now presents itself." Have we the unqualified power to decide our own