

[CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE.]

and in many of the provisions by which it was effected he would wish to see it softened down. If, then, this taxation should be continued, and continued it must be if Government should yield to the pressure of hon. members, the necessary effect will be that the struggling man will be brought to a level with the pauper. But not one word of sympathy do we hear for this class, and not one word of sympathy for the supplying merchant, who, after losing principal and interest, upon the supplies he issues, loses the heavy duties which he has paid, and often loses his capital into the bargain. He believed that all the evils of the country took their rise from the credit system, which bears as heavily as slavery upon the people, and which has brought ruin, not only to the supplying, but to the supplied. The faith between parties was broken down, and if the system could be done away with all classes would be benefited. As to Confederation, his (Mr. R's) sentiments were well known. He had been favorable to it even before he became member of this House, and he was still convinced that it would prove beneficial to the country. But he did not believe that it would wipe away pauperism at once. Even after Confederation became accomplished. We should still have to contend with pauperism. But there was a growing opinion among all classes in favour of the scheme, and in his own district many of the leading men had come completely round, and many would accept Confederation even on the terms of the Quebec Convention. However, he merely touched upon this subject in passing. He was still of the opinion that a union with Canada upon equitable terms could not fail to prove advantageous to us. The matter before the chair was upon which every hon. member should express his opinion. For his part he gave his cordial adherence to the course adopted by the Government in offering a resolute resistance to the resumption of pauper relief.

Hon. Mr. HOGSETT.—The Government of Sir Hugh Hoyles gave more scope to Pauper Relief than any other Government in this country. The Opposition were not the originators of pauperism, and the population they represented was the best in Newfoundland.

Hon. Mr. RORKE.—It was fifteen years old then. Mr. H. was not in the habit of telling lies. It was too much truth he told. It was because he told the truth that he evoked the hostility of hon. members and of other men. For the information of the hon. member, Mr. Rorke, he would tell him that if the policy of Mr. Kent's Government had been carried out he would not be dealing in pauper relief. It had not been chronic.

Hon. Mr. BENNETT.—Wished to say a few words in sustainment of the position which the Government had assumed upon the question of poor relief. He believed, and the Opposition or at least those of them who were candid and sensible men, would admit that in this matter the Government had been actuated by no political motive. The Government were as certain to be sustained in the course they had taken, by the intelligent and independent, as they were certain to receive the disapprobation of all those who looked to them for support—and as the latter class was far the more numerous one, they must of course expect that the disapprobation would be the greater.

The Government were, however, sustained by conscious rectitude—by the knowledge that they had done what was right and proper. He felt proud of the stand which the Government had taken, for it was a noble one—and had to be taken at some time. It was a matter of contention where and by whom the system of poor relief to the able-bodied had been introduced and who was to blame for it. He (Mr. B.) was too young a member of this Assembly to know himself, but nothing was certain; it was easier as that the very vitals of the country. He considered that it was stopped at a very good time, though for himself he must say that he would have desired to have seen it done some three years ago. It became plain to every man that sooner or later this system must have an end, and what time could be better for stopping it than when there was a prospect of a fair fibery? That was the case last year. Last winter when poor relief was given out and the packet frozen up in Placentia Bay and the Ariel at the Northward he (Mr. B.) felt that it was indeed a trying time. Many families to the Westward supported themselves by Herrings alone. He (Mr. B.) would indeed be sorry that the Government should let any man starve. This poor relief system was something like a man with a chronic disease. He meets a surgeon who says if the affected part is cut off you will live, otherwise you die. He submits to the operation. He keenly feels the cutting of the knife as it divided the tissues, sinews, and veins; but in a few days the anguish passes away; he is a new man and he blesses the surgeon who could not have saved him without making him suffer for a time. The poor relief system bore the same analogy to the Government that the disease did to the man. The people would not doubt suffer a little, but it was for their ultimate good. He had much pleasure in giving cordial support to paragraph before the chair.

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