

country? Does it take advantage of its large majority to pass the resolution? Does it take the country by surprise? All we ask is that the resolutions be fairly and quietly considered, arrive at what the terms should be, and then contrast them with the existing state of things; and say if the country would be ameliorated by the change. Then they would be submitted to the Dominion Parliament; and if accepted, the House would be dissolved, and the whole colony would be called upon to ratify or reject them. We are hardly so intolerant as to say that the people do not understand the question or know what they would be called upon to determine. If we quietly entered into a discussion and examination of its details, what need be afraid of? We are afraid of our own political positions being extinguished—our Parliamentary consequence being abated? Surely the interest of the colony should be paramount to all other considerations. He had now expressed his opinions, and they were the opinions of all upon this side of the House—gentlemen who represented every phase in the commerce of the country. In conclusion he would say in the ancient warning of the Church—*cursum corda*—and so consider this great question fraught with such vital consequences to the future welfare of this country, free from all party tactics, and with a single and sincere desire to promote the best interests of our native or adopted land.

Mr. GLEN only intended to say a very few words. All the hon. members who had spoken upon the Government side of the House seemed to anticipate the question of Confederation, and the hon. Receiver General now asks the House to calmly deliberate upon a question which is not yet formally before it. Now, he would ask, could this House enter into consideration of the question of Confederation, when at present the details were not before them, and when they knew nothing about them? He (Mr. G.) was indeed glad to hear that this question was to be left entirely for the country to decide upon. He, however, did not believe such would be the case, from the first, and further, he did not believe it now. The hon. the Receiver General says we are to agree to certain terms which will be sent to the Canadian Parliament for its approval, and then referred to the constituencies for their ratification or rejection. Now that course was certainly not shadowed forth in the speech of his Excellency the Governor. That speech calls upon us to affirm the principle of union, and yet the hon. Receiver-General never said a word about that. If this House now were going to affirm the principle of Confederation, it would be a betrayal of the agreement which the hon. Attorney General made, and which was that no matter should first be submitted to the constituencies. Do you intend this House to affirm the principle of union?

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—We are not bound by it until it receives the sanction of the people, to whom it must be submitted.

Mr. GLEN.—Are you going to affirm the principle of union in this General Assembly? That is the question, and that is the question you are shirking.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—I am not shirking any question. What I do will be done openly.

Mr. GLEN.—Why, then, does the hon. Receiver General tell us that the Government programme is, it is not to be carried out? What that hon. gentleman said was fair and right, and he (Cdr. G.) would endorse every word of it. But he would warn the Government that this side of the House were not to be entrapped without a fight. All they wanted was fair play for the country. This House had nothing to do with the principle of union. Let the Government bring down their resolutions, and let us see what the details are, and then we can go to the country upon them. We are told every day to keep calm, and yet we don't know what we are to keep calm about. Would the hon. Receiver General tell us whether we would be called upon to affirm the principle of union? No; his speech on the point resembled the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out. With regard to the question of Reciprocity, and the way in which the hon. member had viewed it, he (Mr. G.) would say that it was absurd. If we want anything for Revenue purposes, we can tell the United States, and say to them we will put on 5 per cent, and do you do the same, and then we would have reciprocity. Did not the British Government exact duties? Reciprocity did not exclusively mean a total abrogation of duties, but an assimilation of tariffs also. This trap, then, about reciprocity, was merely to show the people that we could not get anything except we were confederated. Now could we not have a commercial treaty with Canada, instead of this union? He would tell the Government that they would not carry the principle of Confederation without a hard struggle.

THE HON. THE SPEAKER.—It appears that many hon. gentlemen in this House have been rather premature in their discussion of the question of Confederation. A few cursory remarks might not certainly have been out of place, but that full and ample discussion which it had received from some hon. members was uncalled for, especially when, in a short time, the question will come formally before the House for dispassionate deliberation. The hon. and learned Attorney General has this day told us that the present period is a crisis in the world's history; and in the history of Newfoundland. He (the Speaker) feared that the crisis had not yet arrived. We were still suffering from the fever, but the disease had not yet reached its crisis. Now this House had already spent nine or ten days in discussing the Address of thanks in reply to his Excellency's speech at the opening of this session. Of course it was to be expected that that speech would be attacked by the opposition, and that it would be defended by the Government side. As usual, it had been designated a barren, bald and naked speech. He, however, must say that he never heard a speech delivered from the throne containing so many matters of vital importance, and fraught with so deep an interest to every individual in this Island. In its reference is made to the absence of any calamity during the past year, to a successful fishery, to the abundant yield of the potato crop. He (the Speaker) could not recollect when labour was so amply rewarded as it had been during the past year. But was there any improved condition of the people corresponding to that success? On the contrary, is there not more depression, starvation and misery than heretofore? He believed

nothing had occurred in the past history of this country that could compare with the present existing state of things. When we saw, then, all this, when we saw those engaged in administering the Government of the country—with so great a burthen upon them, with such an impending crisis over us all, it behoved every man to lend his aid and assistance and influence in meeting the difficulties of our position. This was no time for the exercise of a factious opposition, the indulgence of an obstructive policy. But those hon. members on the opposition bench should lend their assistance to the Government, to help them through the difficulties by which they were surrounded. Accusations had been made from time to time, that the Government were the cause of all these misfortunes. But they were mere empty allegations, which were without the slightest foundation, and to support which not a tittle of proof could be given. What were the causes of these difficulties? The causes were many, and had not occurred yesterday. They had been growing for years. We all know that the population of this country has been rapidly increasing, but with no commensurate increase in the industrial occupations of the people. Our forefathers had but one resource, the fisheries, and unfortunately we were in the same position. That resource was now failing. Look for one moment at our Salmon fishery, which heretofore had yielded such a rich produce, a fishery which if it were fostered and protected, would be sufficient alone to yield a competency to the whole labouring population. That fishery is now comparatively nothing, compared to what it was in former years. We find, therefore, that our fishery had not merely failed to keep pace with our growing population, but that it had actually decreased. Even in Agriculture, very little progress had been made. The few patches of land that had been cleared, had failed to yield even a fair return for the labour which had been bestowed upon them. Then we had the potato disease, and yet with all the scientific means that had been used, we had not yet succeeded in eradicating it, or in discovering any means that would arrest its progress. He must say that he was astonished when he heard hon. gentlemen of the opposition attack the Government for not having expended some £3,000 for seed potatoes, when they well knew that the failure of the potato crops had been one of the causes of reducing the country to the state in which it is at present. What, expend £3,000 in distributing seed potatoes, which after all the labour that was bestowed upon them, might result in nothing. Although the past year, under the mercy of Providence, we had been favoured with abundant crops, yet go now and ask the people who had saved these crops, what had become of them. They would tell you that they were becoming rapidly diseased in their cells, and were wasting away. The unfortunate course which had been adopted in this country for a great number of years, had trained the people into the habit of looking to the public revenue for support, and as that to which they had a right. Very shortly after representative institutions were introduced into this country, pauper relief was initiated, and up to the present it had been fostered and sustained by representatives of the people in this House. Who can deny it, that he was considering the best man who could obtain the greatest amount of poor relief? This was the case, and no one could deny it. It commenced in St. John's, and had extended to all the other districts. Who, then, was the result? We found now a generation of men bred up in pauper relief, and trained to look to the revenues of the country as to that to which they had a right, and not to depend upon their own industry or labour for their support. He would say that at such a time as this, with the greater portion of the people in a starving condition, he was indeed sorry to hear any man appeal to the passions of a hungry starving and ignorant people. He regretted such a course exceedingly, and hon. members might yet find that they were not the first who sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. We had then only one resource (except one mine) which engaged the labour of the people, and only sufficient capital was retained in the country to carry on the one branch of industry. What power had the Government over capital, which had been drawn out of the country? Could they arrest the progress of the potato disease, or make the fisheries more productive? Were they to blame for the pauper relief system, a system which had grown up before we had responsible Government at all? But if we cannot coerce capital to remain, we may place the country in such a position as to attract it. We may woo it to our shore, and if there be a means of doing so, should we not adopt it? Our isolation placed us in that position, that alone we could do nothing. When we made appeals to the Imperial Government, how had they been responded to? Had we not been knocking and kicking at Downing street, and what did we get by it? When, then, there was an opportunity offered to us of uniting ourselves to the adjacent colonies, and thus obtaining a power which as we are we could not possess, was it not a matter which should be discussed seriously and calmly, not in that factious or party feeling? We are told that no Canadian capital would flow into this country. Now what capital was working the mines of Nova Scotia, and sustaining the manufactures of New Brunswick? Compare the labouring classes in Canada with our own operative population. There every man had employment and fair pay, and could lift up his head in independence. We knew very well that, from the precarious nature of the avocations of the people, there would be times of depression and times of prosperity. Would it not then be well if we were united to so prosperous a country as the new Dominion. At all events Nova Scotia, a short time ago, thought

that it was well to be confederated. If she had not been, where could she have got those thousands which were sent to her relief? (Here the hon. and learned gentlemen referred to the misrepresentation which were being made by those opposed to union, and alluded to an instance which had lately come up under his own notice, that men could not cut wood without a license or go to the fishery without a license, which they would have to pay for when this colony was united with the New Dominion.) This, then, is the style of things which has been said by the great head centre of the Anti-Confederate cause in this country. May I ask what are the great benefits to be derived from Confederation? But he would say, what are we to do without it? The only pecuniæ that was offered was the reduction of the public expenditure. He (the Speaker) could only judge of the future from the past. Since 1832 we had had many Governments, and all without exception had increased the public debt and the public expenditure. That speech, barren, bald and uninteresting. There was one subject to which it all alluded, which was of the deepest importance, and on which they might well congratulate themselves, and that was the settlement of the French Shore question. He believed that that would result in the employment of a large amount of capital in mining operations on that shore. The time would come when every matter mentioned in this speech would come before the House. They would then have an opportunity of expressing themselves in detail on each subject. At the present time he would, as he always did, confine himself to making a few remarks on the general port of the speech.

Mr. RENOUF could find no fault with the speech of the hon. Receiver General, who had set forth his views fairly, reasonably and temperately, but the speech of the hon. and learned Speaker reminded him of the lamentations of Jeremiah. No matter how he might differ from the views of both these hon. gentlemen, he could assure them that on his (Mr. R.'s) side of the House they required no admittances from the Government side on the question of Confederation. When it comes before this House it shall receive that cool dispassionate consideration which a question of its great importance demands. The hon. Receiver General says that Confederation will give the people employment. A greater fallacy was never uttered, and the country would not believe it. Let, however, the advocates of Confederation show the truth of this assertion and then all would accept their doctrine. Free Trade. The hon. member for Ferryland had shown how they could have reciprocity. What was there to prevent us from having Commercial Reciprocity with Canada, now, which would accomplish as much for us as any Confederation? They had heard a good deal of living flour and pork and other such articles free of duty, and also of their present state of isolation. What made that isolation so complete? Would Confederation remove the barrier of ice which surrounds those shores? It was the duty of the House to economise, and before the session closed hon. gentlemen at his (Mr. R.'s) side of the House would show the country that such reductions can be made as would, if carried out, enable the Government to reduce the taxation. Suppose we had Confederation, and that to-morrow we required a supply of Canadian flour, by what means could it be brought here? At this time our vessels, on their return from the Brazils and West Indies, call at New York, &c., and thus supply our wants; and it was to be supposed that they would be diverted to diverge so far from their course as to go up the St. Lawrence, and incur all the additional risk and expense of such a course? No doubt we would be told that the necessity for such a course would be obviated by the Railway. Halifax would be the Atlantic terminus of that Railway, and what would be the cost of transit to Halifax? If these things could be got cheaper from Canada, how is it that our people do not trade there? Our trade with the United States is to the extent of about £45,000 a year, while with Canada it is only £10,000 or £20,000. The hon. Receiver General says he can show by carefully prepared returns what Canada will give us and what she will take from us, and that we would have \$100,000 a year for Rail Expenditure. How, hon. gentlemen differ. What the hon. and learned Attorney General and the hon. Mr. Shea returned from Quebec, in 1831, they stated this country would have a perpetual road grant of £12,000. He (Mr. R.) recollects that when he first heard their statements he made some calculations and found that there could be no such result, and that to get £12,000 for roads they should starve grants for other purposes. This idea was another fallacy. The hon. Receiver General asks how we could have a road grant if we remain as we are? It could be had by severe economy applied to expenditure and public Institutions. He (Mr. R.) agreed with the hon. and learned Speaker that a crisis is at hand, but that crisis was different from that alluded to by the hon. and learned gentleman. The crisis was one which would paralyse expenditure both inside and outside of this House. The expenditure was far beyond the requirements of the country, and while, session after session, taxes were laid on taxes, no attempt was made to reduce official salaries. The hon. and learned Speaker had said that all classes of laborers were fairly remunerated during the past year. How many thousands of fishermen had been without the means of prosecuting the fishery, and were compelled to sell their nets green to meet their daily wants? Then was it not nonsense to tell such people that their labor had been fairly rewarded? The hon. and learned gentleman also called on the Opposition to help the Government out of their difficulties. They were not of our creation. We had pointed out many remedies to the Government, but had always got the deaf ear, and now the proposed result had come, and the only remedy proposed was Confederation. It was not true that Poor Relief had its origin in St. John's. It had its rise when under the old irresponsible Government 1000 barrels of flour were sent to Trinity. It was easy to make these charges against the capital, when it was the refuge for the poor of all the seaports, whose it had to support, in addition to its own. Reference had been made to the capitalists of Canada building up the manufactures of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia; why the fact was that these two Colonies had manufactures when they stood alone, but Confederation had crushed them out. The hon. and learned Speaker spoke of the various forms of Government which had been in this Colony, and said that each had piled on taxes, and referred to the present Government as beset with more difficulties than any other. He (Mr. R.) would ask what Government had been so lavish in their expenditure, or so increased the burdens of the people? It, instead of

a grand scheme showing what to do for us? But owing to the imperfect knowledge of figures, £37,000 against the hon. member tell us Dominion would give? If the terms offered to us, it was reported we should not hear of them by the Executive, and a supporter of the party. So said about Tilt Cove, and taken to revile Mr. C. F. Bent, of the greatest benefactors the [Here the hon. member reads on a letter of Mr. Smith McKeen,] defending Mr. Bennett it made against him.] It had been said that Mr. C. F. Bent had lost some money in the anti-confederate done so; he had not put his hand in his pocket. He did nothing, gentlemen, who, after giving a man, go down to Dr. Sheas. And hon. gentlemen say "the our present condition is. Condition will give us honours and We have mismanaged every people and after this, let us unite." The traitors of Nova Scotia shackles upon the people positions of eminence and course it is only reasonable those hon. gentlemen who are being the measure will be a We were advised to go into Co. for what o'clock? Because we were (M. R.) said in all sincerity, shew us the benefit that will be obtained, positive benefits, not chimerical ones, and no man would be than himself. But he would be were he to close his eyes to the that had been going on for the threat us into Confederation, for family compacts. Oh, they say it we speak of the Irish union, when who sold the liberties of Every man who voted for it, the Harbor Grace election was no test at all. The candidates did not go to the people on the question of Confederation at all. There were in the district about 1830 voters, of these only 94 voted, and though the Government used every effort even to threatening those who were employed on the public works, Mr. Godden was returned only by a bare majority of 4. This was the greatest triumph of which so small was made. If the question of Confederation had been fairly submitted, was it to be supposed the people would be interested? He (Mr. R.) took to himself in his credit as a prophet, he had the other evening prophesied that the hon. Mr. Shea would be in want of a dredge for this session, and that that dredge would be telegram for laborers. Well, was not it true, was not the proposal made to export our people to work in the wild woods of Canada on a Railway, the contracts for which are not yet signed? The hon. member now manifests great sympathy with the laboring population, but in 1837, when the Telegraph Company applied for power to extend their capitol, to enable them to add to their lines, and thus give employment to the people, the only member of the Committee who opposed the permission asked for was the hon. Mr. Shea. He yielded at last, but only when he found that the rest of the Committee were unanimous in their desire to give the desired permission. The hon. member, Mr. Shea, has no faith in seed potatoes, because he deals in meal and molasses, and not in potatoes. If the hon. gentleman dealt in potates, he would doubtless profess a very different creed. It was rather a singular fact that though several hon. members have spoken on the Government side since the hon. member, Mr. Shea, had propounded his transportation plan, not one of these hon. gentlemen had uttered a word about it; but, on the contrary, they had appeared to avoid it very carefully. Other countries endeavoured to woo emigration to their shores, but we seem to be anxious to reverse this policy, and to denude the country of its strength and its pride. You might set aside 10,000 men, but how would that better the condition of those remaining? The idea of shipping 800 men to Canada, before a single contractor had entered into a contract, was simply preposterous. If (Mr. R.) could not see how hon. members could place any confidence in it, resting, as it did, on the bare assumption that the hon. member for Placentia and St. Mary's. How benignant had the Canadian Government become. Not a word, last year, about relieving the poverty of the people, but, at this peculiar moment, when these hon. gentlemen are trying to force us into Confederation, the people are to be bribed to sell the country. Hon. gentlemen opposite were afraid to bear the responsibility of selling the country, but they endeavoured to make a catch-up of the unfortunate fishermen to accomplish that which they dread to do themselves. He (Mr. R.) would like to ask what had become of the Cape Ray telegraph? Many persons believed in the probability of that project being accomplished, and what authority was brought up to support it? Mr. Sandford Fleming. The project, however, failed to the ground, and a new dredge was enterprise. And whose authority does the new scheme rely upon? Strange coincidence, upon Mr. Sandford Fleming. Let the hon. member, if he were honest, come out with some broad, comprehensive plan, and he would, at least, be appreciated. But it was not by such dredges and junks and empty bubbles that the people were to be imposed upon. The hon. member says that there can be no great economy practised in our expenditure. Why, one institution supporting a hundred passengers had in 1867, 940 passengers of coal at 8s. per hds and 733 loads of wood, at 4s. a load. Surely there must be something rotten in such a state of things. Year after year, amendment was promised, but year after year the same complaints had to be made. Bad as the opposition might be, could they do much worse than this? Are hon. members to be dictated to by such hon. gentlemen as the learned member for Brigus, who comes down here with

After some remarks from M motion for the adoption of the p and carried.

The Committee then rose and voted progress. To sit again at

On motion of Mr. Pinxter, pa Messrs. Pinen, Bennett, Parsons Surveyor-General were appointed on the Geological Survey.

The House then adjourned till o'clock.

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