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DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

(Continued from first page of this week's Examiner.)

Mr. McNeill.—I remember when the Hon. Attorney General pleaded pathetically for Confederation, although he has now changed his position with reference to that question. The Reform Bill and other great measures of British Legislation were not carried by such a course of inconsistency. When, sir, in a former session of the Legislature I was twitted by the Hon. Attorney General with my connection with the Tenant League, and had complained that the Sheriff of Queen's County had libelled the people, the hon. Attorney General asked why the matter had not been brought before the House, but, when it was so brought up, he dared not go into an investigation, but moved that it be postponed 3 months, in other words, dismissed; he had influential friends, whose action in reference to the Tenant League he did not care to have criticized in the House, and unfortunately, there were gentlemen on the other side, similarly situated Sir, never in my life did I feel more proud of my position than when I took my stand outside the Bar of this House, in company with my hon. friend the Member for Belfast, (Hon. B. Davies) to vindicate the character of the people from the aspersions cast upon them. I ask, Mr. Chairman, which of the public men of the Colony can the people rely on, when we see men of intelligence, education, and high social position advocating one line of policy to-day, and to-morrow, when it may suit their interest or convenience, turn round and support a course directly the reverse? The hon. Att'y General has professed himself a confederate, but now he says, "only make me Att'y General, and I will be as strong an anti-confederate as you will be able to find in the country." Oh! filthy lucre, you have slain your thousands, you have always been an enemy to patriotism and liberty.

Hon. Attorney General.—The hon. member has told the House that his constituents endorsed his views and action, in connection with the Tenant League. I have no doubt of it, nor of the fact that he owes to that organization his seat in this House; but my reference to that body was not intended to apply to the hon. member individually, but to the Government, members of which had encouraged and justified their proceedings which are well known to us all. With reference to the question of Confederation my opinions are before the country, and, sir, the pledge I gave to my constituents, I shall faithfully keep. I told them at the hustings that my views were unchanged, and I pledged myself not to vote for Confederation until the question had been submitted to the people at the Polls. That pledge was frankly given, and was well understood by my constituents; but, sir, there are some who will not understand another. I must leave them in the enjoyment of their own views I have not retracted nor been asked to retract a single word of what I stated, and as long as my constituents are satisfied with my conduct, I am content. I have exercised my judgment independently; but, did not the hon. member, only last year, argue that the position of members in this House was, morally, that of delegates?

Mr. McNeill.—I said that we were sent here to make laws and not to destroy the constitution of the country. I hope the hon. Att'y General will bear that in mind and be content to stand or fall by it.

Hon. Mr. Sinclair.—I do not intend to go into the history of England; that has been done by others; the history of the Island affords sufficient topics for me. The Hon. Atty. General said that one of the members from East Point ought not to sit upon the opposition benches, because he entertained views in accordance with those of the Government. The fact is that the Government, for the sake of place, has taken up views adopted by the Liberals on principle. We were willing to take the word of the Catholics as sufficient guarantee of their good faith but the Government expected from them a pledge. I do not think it very creditable for those gentlemen to join a party which had declined to trust their word. As to what has been said about education, I agree with the Hon. Atty. General that the pledge to which I have referred, does not bind the parties to refuse to improve the Education Act, but was intended as a declaration that the Question of Sectarian Grants was to be postponed. As to Confederation, I inferred from what fell from the Hon. Atty General that he would do nothing in the way of initiating our connection with Canada, but, Mr. Chairman, there are more ways than one of carrying out a favorite point, and many a measure has been carried indirectly which would never have succeeded by direct action. I am inclined to think from the Speech that we may have Confederation, whether we like it or not. I have no desire to join Canada and the great majority of the people of the Island, are of the same way of thinking, but if it shall happen that we are weighed down under a burden of taxation greater than that of Canada, it might be desirable to join that Dominion. As I read the paragraph before the Committee, I cannot but believe there is something more in this railway scheme than meets the eye.

Hon. Mr. Howlan.—The Hon. member must certainly consider himself not merely an extract, but the very quintessence of political honesty. He left the subject properly before the Committee, and has intimated that Government has something very mysterious behind the scenes. I cannot, Mr. Chairman, think that the hon. member really believes so, but I have little doubt that he will give us credit for a fair portion of honesty. But, Sir, when I look at the paragraph before the Committee, I fail to see the connection between it, and the speech of the Hon. member. The paragraph reads as follows:—

"We are pleased to notice the deep interest you take in the Agricultural and Industrial pursuits of the Colony, as manifested by your attendance at the General Exhibition held in Charlottetown in October last; and we will at all times be most happy to render every assistance to your Honor for the development of those resources."

Now, sir, this paragraph refers to the Exhibition of last October, and I cannot see any allusion in it to the subject of Education, nor a single reference, however remote, to the vexed Question of Sectarian Grants. Does the hon. member intend to convey the impression that the horses, bulls, pigs and other animals exhibited on that occasion had been educated in Sectarian schools? If he does, the Government had no means of showing from what denominational institution these animals and the manufactured articles—the homespun—the ploughs—and the other specimens of the mechanical ingenuity of our people had been derived. I am at a loss to conceive what has called forth this discussion on the Educational Question. It must be a day dream, a dream of the night, or some other phantom conjured up by the imagination of the Hon. member for Belfast. (Hon. B. Davies.) As to the arrangements which resulted in the formation of the present Coalition Government, if the Hon. member wishes any information on that point, I can gratify him, but I really gave him credit for more sense than he has manifested in this discussion. He has expressed his surprise that the Lieut. Governor's Speech contained no reference to Education. Does he remember the majority which, at a period when he had been but a short time in the House existed, in favor of denominational grants?

Hon. B. Davies.—Then why not have carried it?

Hon. Mr. Howlan.—Because of our connection with such vain minded and bigoted politicians as yourself. I knew that the Hon. Mr. Coles had promised a grant in aid of St. Dunstan's College, and deeply do I regret the dark shadow which has passed upon him. But, oh! shades of Edward Whelan and George Coles! to think of the hon. member, with the name of liberalism on his lips, voting, but a few months since in favor of the Hon. Edward Palmer! When the Catholics went over to the Government they carried the liberal flag with them (oh! oh! from the Opposition). Yes, Mr. Chairman, and it is flying over them still, and when Mr. Coles retired from the Leadership of the liberal party Hon. Mr. Hensley promised the same, and afterwards the Hon. Mr. Haythorne was in favor of it. I stumped my district and found a majority in favor of such grant. Well Sir, did the Catholics, because that grant was not accorded, desert their flag or their friends? No, Sir! although we well knew that the wishes of Thirty-five thousand electors could not be disregarded we had no desire to force our views upon the Protestant portion of the community, nor to impair, much less destroy, the School system of the country. When the Catholics and their former political associates met to arrange their joint policy, they proposed certain resolutions calculated to strengthen the position of the liberal party. The first of these resolutions is in the following words:—

"When any school shall have been opened by any sect or denomination it shall be placed under the Board of Education, and be subject to the rules and regulations thereof, save and except that nothing herein contained shall prevent the parents and guardians from selecting their own text books, and choosing their own teachers."

This resolution, Mr. Chairman is far from injuring any school. It subjects them to the control of the Board of Education, and consequently to the inspection provided by law. When the Catholic members were told that certain members of the liberal party had been returned pledged to oppose sectarian grants, they were willing to waive a portion of their views rather than break up the party, and forbore to press the claim which they believed to be based on justice. The second of the resolutions is as follows:

Resolved, That no schools placed under the control of the Board of Education should be deprived on account of religious instruction being given in such schools of a portion of the education fund, equivalent to the work such schools perform, and that it is expedient to make such a change in the Free Education Act, as will admit religious instruction to be given in the schools in this Island, in such districts as the parents or guardians desire; such instruction to be given and at such hours as are not devoted to secular instruction.

Well, sir, I presume that no man calling himself a christian, will dispute the opinion that childhood is the period of life at which the principles of morality and religion should be instilled into the mind; not only as the impressions then conveyed are more likely to influence the whole after life, but also because instruction is received with more readiness then, than subsequently. What other feeling has induced the Methodists to erect near Charlottetown a building for the education of youth, second to none in this Colony? Recognizing the necessity of the religious element in education they occupy the same platform as the Catholics in asking for a grant for their Schools, the Catholics sought not to break up the present school system, but they merely sought aid under the state things which imposed a necessity on Protestants as well as themselves. Separate school grants obtained in the neighboring Dominion of Canada, and in other dependencies of the Crown, even in far off Victoria. That resolution was framed with the express object of meeting the views of our political friends. It carefully guards against any tampering with the creeds of the pupils and specifies that any religious teaching shall take place after the expiration of the time allotted to secular education. I know men and women in Charlottetown, Georgetown and in Prince County, who are willing to devote their lives to the duty of qualifying others for a life in a better world. Last year the hon. member for Belfast (Hon. B. Davies), gave his opinion that a knowledge of the first four rules of arithmetic, with reading and writing, constituted an amount of education sufficient to qualify for this world and the next. But sir, how was the resolution I have just read met? The hon member for New London (Hon. Mr. Sinclair), moved a Resolution to the effect that it was not advisable to alter the present Education Act to which I moved the following as an amendment:

"Provided always that no school should be deprived of Government allowance on account of religious instruction being imparted in such schools, but that such religious instruction shall in no case be given except with the consent and at the desire of the parents and guardians of the pupils who attend such schools, and at such hours as are not devoted to secular instruction." On the second day of the caucus the Catholic members were told that if they did not choose to waive for all time to come, their claims for aid to their Educational Institutions, they might leave the party which would be joined by another political section, and this combination could and would form and carry on the Government. Thus, sir, our old friends were not content to leave this Question in abeyence for four years, and thinking they could do as they pleased, threw overboard their Catholic associates. I claim credit for the Catholics for their action on this subject. They were willing to abide the time when this subject should be viewed by Protestants in the same light in which they regard it. I have nothing exceptionally favorable to expect from my present political friends, I have done nothing for them The Catholics had a claim on the Protestants members of their former political party, who however, acting on the belief that they could do without them severed the connection of years, and in consequence were badly *Euchred*. We acted on the principal enunciated to day by the hon. member for Charlottetown (Hon. D Davies) that we would not consent to put half the population under a ban, and array Protestants against Catholics. I was pleased to hear such an observation coming, as it did from a gentleman who had belonged to a Government from which Catholics were excluded. Regretting that I have occupied the time of the Committee so long, I shall not trouble it with further remarks at present.

Hon. D. Davies—The hon. member must have misunderstood my observations with reference to the absence of Catholics from the former Government of which I was a member. I wish to explain that, at a meeting between the Catholic members and the section of the Conservatives with which I acted, I expressed my regret that they had separated themselves from us. That separation was caused by the introduction of the bill for the incorporation of Orange Lodges. That measure was sprung upon us by a member of the then Government, (the Hon. W. H. Pope) and such a bill will not have my support again. I said that I had not opposed it. I think that, in a young country like this Island, those institutions are unnecessary, and the feelings from which they arise, and which they tend to foster, should be allowed to die out. But, I am not aware that the Government excluded Catholics from the Council Board; they separated themselves from us. Referring to the paragraph before the Committee I am decidedly of opinion that the prizes awarded should be of greater amount. Those hitherto given are altogether inadequate to induce people to bring articles to Charlottetown from any considerable distance. I am aware that dissatisfaction has been felt as to the awards of the prizes in some cases, but it should be remembered that it is very often a difficult matter to decide upon the merits of animals of nearly equal qualities and appearance, and, on such matters, there will always be more or less difference of opinion. In debating this paragraph of the Address, a brief reference to the Stock Farm seems not to be out of place. Already that farm has been productive of much good, and I hope the Government will sanction a liberal grant for it. The country requires the introduction of more animals of improved breeds.

Hon. Mr. Sinclair—Mr. Chairman, I was a member of the Government at the time referred to by the hon. member from Cascumpec (Hon. Mr Howlan), and I assert that the Catholics, at that time separated themselves from the Government on the Educational question They said, plainly and unequivocally, that they must have a grant for their institutions, or they would leave the party, and they were then as plainly told that they should not have it. The hon. member took great credit to himself for the liberality and moderation of the resolutions he submitted to the caucus, and was particularly pleased with the second of them That resolution is in these words:—

"*Resolved*, That no school placed under the control of the Board of Education, should be deprived, on account of religious instruction being given in such schools, of a portion of the education fund, equivalent to the work such schools performed; and that it is expedient to make such a change in the Free Education Act as will admit religious instruction to be given in the schools in this Island, in such districts as the parents or guardians desire such instruction to be given, and at such hours as are not devoted to secular instruction."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I maintain that this vaunted resolution is of no use, and need not have been submitted at all. The Education Act already provides for the privilege of religious worship. We were told that the Catholics would never be satisfied until they obtained a grant, and the hon. member referred to the spirited action of the Methodist body, in organizing an admirable educational institution near Charlottetown. I fully concur in what he said in connection with that institution, but the Methodists have not asked for a grant of public money in aid of it. I believe, if the State pays for religious instruction, it must be of some particular kind, and it would be an unfair application of the general funds of the Colony, to grant public aid to one denomination to the exclusion of the others. I said that the Education Act provides all that is embodied in the second resolution of the hon. member. The 36th section states that, "The public schoolhouse in every district established or regulated, under this, or any former Act, relating to education, with the consent of the majority of the trustees thereof, be used by the licensed teacher thereof, for the purpose of teaching night or evening classes therein, for his, or her own benefit and such schoolhouse may be used as a place of worship, or for any other lawful public meeting, with the consent of the trustees as aforesaid, and at such time as they may appoint," and authorises the Board of Education to prevent the regular school hours being interfered with by any special use of the building.

Hon. Mr. Howlan.—Then why did not the hon. member vote for my resolution? I would like to know whether the teacher, under the section just read by the hon. member, would be authorized to teach religion in a schoolhouse for his, or her own benefit? If the teachers can use the buildings, after school hours, in teaching what they please, for their own benefit, religious worship may have to yield to the lighter branches of education such as dancing, the French, or any other language, and it may be, that a young lady teacher, propounding the doctrines of free-thinking, and other freedoms, might tempt an old bachelor to her school. (Laughter.)

Mr. Reilly.—Mr. Chairman, I rise to explain my position in refence to the Government. Altough connected for four years with the party at present in opposition, I never had reason to believe that their government was more liberal than the present one. When the Hon. Mr. Haythorne tried to deal manfully and fairly with the Catholics, the party was broken up, in consequence of the extreme views held by some members of it, It consequently became necessary that some gentleman should be sent for by His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, to form a new government. The Hon. Leader of the present Government having been called upon to assume that duty, invited a conference with those who he thought would coalesce in reconstructing the Council. I regret that the question of education should have been treated from a party stand point. As to myself, it has been my aim to endeavor to educate the popular mind up to the subject. But, if the Hon. Leader of the Government had been unsuccessful in his endeavor to form a Council, the Island would have been agitated by all the rancorous passions sure to be elicited by a struggle between the two divisions of the population, Protestant and Catholic. The Catholics are content to await the time when unanimity on this question shall prevail between both these bodies. I have signed the pledge alluded to by the hon. member from New London (Hon. Mr. Sinclair), and believe that, in so doing, I have contributed to the peace and harmony of the people. That pledge is before the country; it merely binds those who signed it, not to alter the Education Act until such alteration be required by the people. The subject is in the same state as it was previously, and we pledged ourselves not to change it during the duration of this House. But, as I stated in caucus, that pledge did not restrict those who were parties to it from expressing their opinions on it, when it might be brought up in the Legislature. In conclusion, I may say that, so long as Catholics do not approve the present system, it is unjust, and savors of tyranny, to take their money, without their receiving an equivalent for it. The Wesleyans have been referred to in this discussion. True it is that they have erected a handsome edifice, as a schoolhouse, in the vicinity of Charlottetown, and I give them all credit for their public spirit. But why did they do so? Because they found that our common schools did not afford that degree of education which they desired for their children. The Catholics have similar feelings. The Wesleyans, as a body, are wealthy, and I cannot but think it a hardship that the Catholics, who, as a class, are, in a pecuniary point of view, in a very different position, should be compelled to contribute towards a system of which they do not approve.

Mr. Munro—Mr. Chairman it is not my intention to detain the Committee many minutes. I shall, in as few words as possible, express my approval of the policy on the school question enunciated by the present Government. That declared policy is that no grants of public money be voted to any denominational, or sectarian schools. There is nothing in that declaration, however, to delay or prevent our having schools of different grades in the towns and villages of the Island. It is impossible that the full benefits of the system can be realized, while the time of our teachers is to be devoted to teaching the primary rudiments, even the alphabet, upwards through the various stages, to the higher branches of Algebra. There should be a separate provision for pupils who have to acquire the elements of education. The question has occupied the attention of enlightened men in other countries, and it must, of course, come up here; and it is one which my constituents regard as of so great importance, that I could not be expected to give a silent vote upon it On the subject of Industrial Exhibitions, the hon. member from East Point (Mr. McLean) has expressed a wish that it might be held at Souris, but Sir, Georgetown is far more central for King's County, and has the advantage of a suitable building, and the hon. member might as well seek to have it held at Murray Harbor, or any other locality. For Prince County, Summerside has the same advantage, its capacious drill shed affording ample accommodation to the exhibitors, and those of the public who may desire to attend the Exhibition; and it would be as reasonable to remove the site of the Prince County Exhibition from Summerside to Cascumpec, or Tignish, as to change the locality of the Prince County Exhibition from Georgetown to Souris. H.

Hon. Mr. McEachen said Georgetown was forty miles distant from the East. His hon. Colleague was perfectly justified in saying that it was an unsuitable place to hold a public exhibition of the industries of King's County, as its peculiar locality renders it so difficult for farmers to reach it from all parts of the County. He would, probably, on a future occasion, have more to say on that point.

House resumed.

Progress was reported. Adjourned until to-morrow. G.

Wednesday, Feb, 22nd.

Debate on Draft Address resumed.

The fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth paragraphs were severally read and agreed to. The ninth, relating to the removal of prohibitory instructions issued against United States fishermen was read.

Hon. Mr. Perry said that it was very well known that our allowing United States fishing vessels to come into our ports for the purpose of obtaining supplies, was the means of bringing a considerable sum of money into the Colony, and of assisting our trade. We should therefore rather encourage these fishermen to purchase their supplies in this Colony. The Island was much better off under Reciprocity, than at any time preceding it. American fishermen came into our ports and purchased supplies of milk, eggs, butter, potatoes, salt, vegetables and whatever else we had to dispose of, and thus greatly assisted our trade. We received a larger price for our fish and agricultural produce, than we ever had before. But the late restrictions prevented those fishing vessels from entering our harbors, and thus injured our trade. He did not know that the British Government were to be blamed for it, for the United States had abrogated the Reciprocity Treaty, and could expect nothing else than the treatment they had lately received. The old Treaty of 1818, went into effect when the Reciprocity Treaty was abolished, and the strictly carrying out of the provisions of the former, prevented United States fishermen from entering our ports. He was very glad, however, that the restrictions placed upon those fishing vessels had been removed, and that a commission had been appointed by the British Government, to proceed to Washington, for the purpose of bringing about a settlement of those difficulties The removal of those restrictions might be the means of inducing the United States Government to negotiate a new Treaty on fair terms in return.

Mr. Beer, was very glad that the restrictions which had been placed upon United States fishing vessels during the month of August last, had been removed. He hoped that it would be the means of bringing about a renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty, for the country had made greater progress while enjoying the benefit of that Treaty, than it ever had before. The removal of the late restrictions would permit American fishing vessels to purchase their outfits and supplies in our ports, and thus increase our trade. The American market was the principal national market for our productions, and, therefore, if a new Treaty could be secured, it would benefit the Colony to a vast extent, Whether the removal of the restrictions would assist in bringing about the desired result, would remain to be seen.

Mr. McNeill was glad those restrictions upon United States fishing vessels had been abolished. The Reciprocity Treaty had conferred great benefits upon the Colony, and it was a great misfortune when it had ended. Why our internal trade had been interfered with by the Dominion Government, he was at a loss to know. Canada had taken upon herself what Great Britain did not assert authority to do. The purchasing of fishing outfits and supplies by American fishermen, formed a very important part of our trade, and should never have been interfered with. The Americans were also benefited by being allowed to land their fish in bond, to be re-shipped to the United States; it was very convenient for them and did us no harm Trade with the Americans should be encouraged in every way, and, therefore, we should cultivate friendship with them. The hon. member for Tignish had stated that he (Hon. Mr. McN.) would receive no more Catholic votes; but he could tell him that he had the full confidence of his constituents. Mr. Howlan had no more influence in his district than he had in Mr. Howlan's; unless the latter had some greater power behind him He (Mr. McN.) could tell how and why he received the support of his constituents, he had lived among them and so had his father before him, and if the hon. member thought he got there under false pretences, he was very much mistaken. He (Mr. McN.) had told his constituents that he believed the non sectarian system of Education was most suitable to this Colony, and that the late Bishop McDonald had approved of it. The Roman Catholics, nearly to a man, had voted for him, and therefore he thought it very much out of place for the hon. member to throw out such insinuations.

Hon. Mr. Howlan said that the hon. member for Rustico had misunderstood him. He (Hon. Mr. H.) had merely said that the hon. member owed his seat in that House to Catholics. It was well known that the hon. member had received the French Acadian support; and it was, therefore, perfectly clear that he owed his election to the Catholic electors of that District.

Hon B. Davies.—There was, at the last election, a clear understanding in reference to the School Question, for the opinions and policy of the late Government were clearly made known. The people were well aware that that Government were opposed to a grant to St. Dunstan's College. The hon. member for Fort Augustus (Hon. Mr. Kelly) while in the late Government before the late elections, said that the Catholic members were quite willing to allow the schools to remain as they were; and large numbers of respectable Roman Catholics had declared that they would rather pay for the support of St. Dunstan's College out of their own pockets, than to interfere with the present system. The Elections throughout Queen's County had been carried with the understanding that no grants would be given for sectarian purposes. When the caucus after the elections was called by the late Government, there was found to be an under-current setting in. The policy of certain members who were in favor of sectarian grants was not a straightforward one; for it was understood before going to the Polls that the schools were to remain as they were. At the caucus those members declared in favor of a grant, and, of course, were refused. He (Hon. B. Davies) fully acknowledged all the support he had received from his Roman Catholic constituents, and was determined to take care of their interests as far as lay in his power. He had not received the undivided support of the Catholics in his District, and that showed that they were not all of the same opinion in reference to our school system. He had been rejected by the people of Souris some years ago, because he would not support a grant to St. Dunstan's College and the Catholic Schools. He had mixed freely with the people up there, and found that they would not support any gentleman who opposed sectarian grants. He was, therefore, bound to believe the statement of the hon. member for East Point (Mr. McLean) that he felt bound to support a grant to St. Dunstan's College and other Catholic Educational institutions. He (Hon. B. D.) could not, therefore, see why Catholic members on the Government side of the House, had tried to injure the member for East Point in the way they had. At the caucus held by the Liberal Party, the hon. member for Tignish (Hon. Mr. Howlan) wanted to be Premier, at least, such was his (Hon. Mr. D's) opinion; and because he could not secure Mr. Haythorne's place, he declared that he would go over to the Conservative side of the House and take the Catholic members with him. He (Hon. B. D.) had never objected upon the Conservatives for agreeing to take in the mercenaries who had offered them their services; for the latter never asked a single favor in return. The Hon. Leader of the Government had a perfect right to receive them on those conditions. If the Catholic members of the Government had chosen to abandon their principles and join the Conservatives, they might go, and he (Hon. B. D) would say, "God go with them." The hon. member for Tignish (Hon. Mr. Howlan) went out of the caucus carrying the religious flag, and called upon all present at the meeting, who were members of the Roman Catholic Church, to follow him, and he would lead them to glory. The hon member was a champion of Church rights, and was going to obtain for the Bishop what he asked for. But the hon. member had, all the time, been subservient to his own ambition, and distorted the interests of his Church to suit himself. What did he care for the Bishop? Instead of acting as he had done, the hon. member should have first tested the question of sectarian grants in the House of Assembly, and not have done it in the underhand way he did. He (Hon. B. D.) was surprised to see the hon. member place himself in the position he was now in; and all his shining talents could not mystify that position. Although the hon. member pretended to be doing so much for Catholics, he (Hon. B. D.) stood as high to-day in the estimation of the Catholics of Belfast as he (Hon. Mr. H.) did. He (Hon B. D.) understood that it had been decided by the majority that the hon. member for Rustico (Mr. McNeill) was to be sent back to his constituents to run another election, and that the Frenchmen in that District were to be forced to vote against him. Let them try it. There was more pluck in the French of Rustico than the hon. member for Tignish imagined. The hon. member for Rustico would, without doubt, be sent back to the House by his constituents. It would be, perhaps, just as well to have another general election, and a fair field. There was something dark about the late elections, that ought to be cleared up. In Queen's County where there was so much intelligence, could not the High Sheriff have found five or six persons to carry out the provisions of the law to the letter? Certainly. But in several districts the Returning Officers had grossly neglected their duties; and he (Hon. B. D.) did not believe it had all happened by chance. It was an extraordinary affair. The scheme appeared to be to put it in the power of the Leader of the Government to prevent six members for Queen's County from taking their seats in that House. But a crisis took place sooner than was expected, for the Catholic members went over to the other side.

Hon. Leader of the Government, thought that the statements which had been made by the hon. member for Belfast (Hon. B. Davies) would reflect more upon the hon. member himself than upon any member of the Committee. The inconsistency of the hon. member was so great, that when he did state what was consistent with fact, very little attention would be paid to it by any member of that House. The hon. member stated that he supposed the Government had made up their minds to oust the hon. member for Rustico (Mr. McNeill) from his seat. The statement was simply untrue; the Government never had any intention of depriving that hon. member or any other member of the House of his seat. The hon. member for Belfast also stated that there was a dark cloud hanging over the late elections. By whom was the High Sheriff appointed? By the late Government, he was a gentleman who stood high for integrity. Yet the ex-Colonial Secretary had got up, and insinuated that a dark cloud hung over the elections, and that plenty of men might have been found in Queen's County, who would have discharged their duty properly. The Sheriff had said that he appointed the best men he could find; and yet an insinuation had been thrown out by the hon. member for Belfast against that officer. If the hon member believed there was treachery used in the election, why did he not rise in his place at the moment the Speaker took the chair, and move that the High Sheriff's conduct be investigated? If found guilty that officer could have been imprisoned for a life-time. Such insinuations were simply discreditable and disgraceful to any hon. member. He (Hon. Leader of the Government,) gave the hon. member credit for stating anything he thought would make a breach in the Government; but he had no right to drag the Education Question into the debate, for it was not mentioned in the paragraph at all. The hon. member for Tignish (Hon. Mr. Howlan) had given an explanation of the formation of the Government, which ought to have been considered satisfactory. It was, therefore, unfair to be continually bringing the Question into every matter that came before the House: the hon. member should confine himself to the matter before the Committee. He (Hon. Leader of the Government) had not said much about the matter, for the hon. member for Tignish had more interest in it than he had. In justice, however, to the Catholic members, he would state that they did not volunteer their services to the Government. When the late Government broke up, the Administrator sent for him to take the responsibility of forming a new Government. Attempts were made by the Protestant wing of the Liberal Party to form a Coalition with the Conservatives, in order to form a strong Protestant Government, and to deny Roman Catholics all their rights and privileges in its formation. He (Hon. Leader of the Government) was to be shut out with the Catholics and to have no part in the Government; and the present Hon. Attorney General was looked upon as the new Leader. He was always of opinion that there should be no difference, in politics, between Catholics and Protestants, for they had equal political rights and privileges; and, therefore, he distinctly told his friends, that he would not attempt to form a Government, unless the Roman Catholics had a fair representation in it. There was a strong attempt made to form a coalition between the Liberal Protestants and Conservatives, but it did not succeed. Why did the hon. member hold his seat for some days after the majority of the members of his Government had resigned? Was it not with the expectation of getting the Protestant Conservatives to join him in the formation of a Coalition Government? As the Catholic members had not left town, he (Hon Leader of the Government) sought an interview with them, and told them that he had been desired to form a Government; that they had never given the Conservatives any support whatever; that the people who had returned the latter party were opposed to any change in the school system of the Colony; that the Conservatives were bound to preserve the non Sectarian system of Education in its integrity; but that, if they (the Catholic members) would drop the Question, and join the Conservative Party in the formation of a Government, they should have a fair representation in the Executive Council, and a fair share of the public patronage. The Catholic members had sense enough to see that the Conservatives were not in a position to make any concessions on the Educational Question without violating their pledges, and therefore they (the Catholics) consented to let that question lie neutral for four years. The Catholics had not changed their sentiments on the school question, and, therefore, only agreed to bide their time, till public opinion changed in reference to it. It was well known that there were differences of opinion in the late Government on the question of a grant to St. Dunstan's College, and that it was a pretty hard matter for them to associate, in order to carry on the Government. If the Catholics had refused to join the Conservatives, what would have been the result? A religious war would have raged, and a Protestant Government would have been formed. The cry throughout the Island would have been Catholic? or Protestant? Grants? or no Grants? The only Catholic member that ever supported the Conservatives, was the hon. member for Souris (Mr. McEachen), and no member of the party had ever received greater consideration than he had. Instead of being soundly abused, he thought the Conservatives should receive credit for the formation of the coalition. Many persons had blamed him, because he had voted for Catholics at the late election, and declared that there must have been some scheming in connection with it. Every hon. member of the House would endeavor to put himself in as good a position as he possibly could, and if he did vote for Catholic members, it showed that he had no bad feeling towards them. He saw a storm ahead, and that it would soon burst. He thought the Government deserved credit for securing the country against the religious agitation into which the hon. member for Belfast (Hon. B. Davies) would have plunged it. The question of Confederation appeared to be settled for some time to come; and he could assure the hon. member that there was nothing in the back ground, which would have any tendency to force the Colony to join the Dominion, without the consent of its inhabitants. He was very sorry to have wandered from the subject under consideration, as other hon. members had done, for there was nothing about the school question in the paragraph. The question before the Committee was a very important one, and was one upon which they might be called to act when the despatches came down. The hon. member for Belfast (Hon. B. Davies) asked what right the Canadians had to come down here and put restrictions upon American fishermen entering our ports, and to do what the British Government had never attempted to do. He could assure the hon. member, that the Canadians had done nothing of the kind; they had sent out armed vessels for the protection of their own fisheries, but they had never interfered with ours. The restrictions were brought about in the following manner: There were several British men-of-war on our coast, and Captain Hardinge, of the *Valorous*, considered it his duty to protect our fisheries; and he found out, in some way or other, that a number of American citizens had come over here, and, by carrying on the fisheries in the names of other persons, evaded the law. Captain Hardinge thought our authorities were too lax on the matter, and brought it to the attention of the Administrator and Council of the late Government. They, of course, could not refuse to enforce the laws, and had orders given to the Custom House officers, that the Americans should not be allowed to tranship their fish in our ports, or to carry on any trade through their fishing vessels. Had the authorities