

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

Sixth Parliament, Second Session.

(By Our Own Reporter.)

TUESDAY, March 6, 1888.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

FIRST READING.

The following bill was introduced and read a first time:—

Relating to dissolution of united counties—
Hon. A. S. Hardy.

THIRD READINGS.

The following bills were read a third time:—
Respecting the Methodist church at Aurora—
Mr. Widdifield.

Respecting the Town of Parkdale—
Mr. Leys.

Respecting a certain agreement made between the Town of Lindsay, the Midland railway of Canada and the Grand Trunk railway of Canada—
Mr. Leys.

Respecting a certain railway debenture of the Township of Thorah—
Mr. Gould.

To provide for the division of the Township of Walsingham—
Mr. O'Connor.

To incorporate the Town of Stayner—
Mr. Wylie.

Respecting By-law No. 402 of the City of Brantford—
Mr. Hardy.

To enable the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity of London to sell certain lands—
Mr. Meredith.

To authorise the Corporation of the Town of Peterborough to issue debentures—
Mr. Stratton.

Respecting the Nicholls Hospital Trust—
Mr. Stratton.

THE QUEBEC RESOLUTIONS.

Mr. WHITNEY then resumed the debate on the Quebec resolutions. He thought the subject had been pretty well threshed out, and that little remained to be said of it. There was also an unwritten law which he did not himself approve of, but nevertheless had to bow to, that young members should not take part too rashly in a debate of this kind. He would hardly speak at all were it not that he felt sure his constituents were altogether opposed to those resolutions, and it was only with profuse apologies that he would attempt to enter the lists against one so distinguished in his past and present career as the Hon. Attorney-General. (Applause.) He objected to the propositions of the Attorney-General that the power of disallowance might have been allowed to remain with the Dominion Government had it

BEEN EXERCISED ONLY OCCASIONALLY; contending that the very fathers of Confederation had certainly contemplated a liberal use of the veto power when they had bestowed it on the Dominion authorities. Concerning the question of reforming the Senate, the hon. member said the original scheme of the Senate was to make it a sort of "flywheel" on Canadian politics, and quoted some remarks of Hon. Alex. Mackenzie, which he said supported that view. He saw no reason for reforming the Senate. As to the franchise resolution, he thought every legislative body should have full control over the franchise on which members to it were elected, and he believed it was certainly intended at Confederation that the Dominion should control its own franchise. He could not discuss the financial resolutions intelligently because the Treasurer had not yet spoken on it. The hon. member claimed also that the House had no certainty that the revision of the Constitution was final, supposing the proposed resolutions were incorporated in the Confederation scheme. There was no certainty that the Constitution would not be still further improved in years to come. There was one other point. The Liberal party of Canada seemed to have ceased playing with Protection and had adopted a straight Free Trade policy, and he would ask where, supposing the present "abominable tariff" was abolished, were they to get the money to pay to the Provinces the increased subsidies asked for by the resolutions? The hon. Minister of Education had stated the other day that the scheme of Confederation ought never to have been passed until it had been submitted to the people. He agreed with the proposition, and would go even further, and say that the enactment of the Confederation scheme, without being first passed upon by the people, was little short of a

GREAT PUBLIC CRIME,

and he warned the House against repeating the mistake and passing these resolutions before the people had passed upon them. The one great need of Canada, urged the hon.

member in closing, was permanency in her political institutions, and he begged the House to think very seriously before they accepted resolutions which would, he contended, have a contrary effect. (Opposition applause.)

Mr. PACAUD asked the kindness of the House on account of his being so young a member and also because of his lack of familiarity with the English language. It had been suggested that both parties should have been represented at the Quebec Conference, he said, but supposing the hon. member for London had been at Quebec and had considered it his duty to do there as he considered it his duty to do in this House, and oppose everything the hon. leader of the Government brought in, what would have been the result of the conference? Its object would, of course, have been thwarted, and yet the hon. member for London had been several times notified by the Province that the Province did not place any confidence in him. The hon. member referred then to the franchise resolutions, and in doing so, commented upon the improper manner in which the last Franchise Act had been worked in his constituency. He was perfectly sure that the people of the Province would endorse the action of the Government in this matter. The member for Dundas (Mr. Whitney) thought that the Government should have gone to the country before attending the conference. But the Government had the confidence of the people, and the people knew that that confidence would not be abused. In Canada, as in England, the Liberals never hesitated in the duty of awakening and educating their own party. He was sure that not only the House but the country would endorse these resolutions. (Applause.)

QUEBEC RESOLUTIONS.

Hon. A. M. ROSS, rising amid cheers, said:—I think, Mr. Speaker, it is much to be regretted that the hon. leader of the Opposition, in leading the criticism on the propositions for the amendment of the Constitution, should have sought to impart into this debate a spirit of partisanship and acrimony altogether out of place in the consideration of the question before the House. I am glad to see that, with the exception of his second lieutenant, the hon. member for Toronto (or perhaps I am doing the hon. gentleman an injustice. I perhaps ought to have said first lieutenant, as it looks as if the hon. member for North Grey had been deposed)—I say I am glad to see that with the exception of the hon. member for Toronto the other Opposition speakers have had the good sense to refuse to follow in the unworthy path of criticism marked out for them and have endeavored to discuss the propositions in a logical and temperate manner. I think I may especially compliment the hon. member for East Durham as being the first to lead off in this much more appropriate manner of dealing with the subject. His speech both in tone and argument was much better than that of his leader. It may not have been so fluent or frothy, but it was more argumentative and dealt with the proposed amendment in a manner befitting the subject. I think I may extend the same compliment to that of the hon. member for Grenville, who in the main applied his criticisms in a businesslike way, befitting a deliberative body called upon to deal with a subject as grave and momentous as the amendment of our Constitution.

The fact is that the older members of the House are getting a little tired of

THIS OLD LOYALTY SPEECH

of the hon. gentleman from London; they have heard it almost verbatim et literatim, session after session. When first delivered some eight or ten years ago it was amusing and piquant, but when repeated session after session it becomes stale and uninteresting. It is like witnessing a play when you have been a dozen times at the rehearsal. You thoroughly know the plot. You know when the colored fire is to be introduced. You know where the particular studied and well-rehearsed attitude of raising the hands and bowing to the mimic company of rustics on the stage is assumed, it is the preconcerted signal for these rustics to throw up their paper hats, the village band to blare their trumpets and the little boys to frantically beat their big and little drums. Indeed, the stage tricks do not cease until the drop of the curtain. No matter how tedious and hackneyed has been the performance, we know from past experience of years that next morning in the paper which gets the advertising the old familiar complimentary notice will appear, that the actor carried the house by storm, that he electrified the audience, that the exhibition was the grandest attraction of the day, and the performer the greatest living actor of the age.

But while this loyalty farce has its comic aspect it has also its serious aspect. Does it never occur to the member for London that charging

A MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE of this Province with disloyalty and the fos-

tering of rebellion is a very serious thing, and to a true son of Ontario ought not to be indulged in for the purpose of pointing an argument, padding a speech or having a fling at a political opponent? If the leader of the Government is disloyal and if his colleagues are disloyal the majority of the people of this Province are disloyal, because, although the hon. gentleman has appealed to the electors on every hustings on this loyalty cry, the people of this Province have repeatedly, again and again, expressed their confidence in the Government by increased majorities and have indignantly cast the slander back in his teeth.

What is now the immediate cause of the iteration of this charge? It is partly because the Government have presumed to attend a conference of the chosen representatives of the Provinces to consider patriotically what are the evils in the present relations between the Provinces and the Dominion which are causing irritation and discontent and how these could be removed to make the Federal Union work more smoothly. This is called a conspiracy and hatching rebellion, but the circumstance that has more immediately called forth this theatrical horror is that the representatives of Nova Scotia in taking part in the conference desired to be understood that while taking part in the conference and endeavoring to find a remedy for the evils of which that Province complains, their action in taking part in this deliberation was not committing the Province to an abandonment of the right of the people of that Province to agitate for a repeal of the union if the evils under which they felt they labored were not removed.

Now, in the first place the circumstances under which that Province was brought into Confederation must be borne in mind. It is well known that they were coerced against their will into the union—that by blandishments and bribes the Federal Government secured a majority of the Legislature in favor of the Union, but the people at the first opportunity unanimously repudiated their action. With one solitary exception they were defeated on an appeal to the people. We know that to allay the bitter animosity with which the union was viewed by the Nova Scotians, the sanctity of the compact and the B. N. A. Act was invaded and better terms given to Nova Scotia and the head and front of the repeal agitation, the Hon. I. Howe, was purchased by a seat in the Cabinet; but Nova Scotia has never yet

CORDIALLY ACCEPTED THE SITUATION.

The question of repeal of the union and a return to their original position as a separate Province was directly put to them at the late general election for the Legislature, and the Local Government—committed to agitation for repeal unless relief could be had from the burden which oppressed them—was sustained by an overwhelming majority of the people. Was it improper for this Government, so committed and so feeling the injustice under which they were suffering, to say at the opening of the conference, We are willing to meet the representatives of the other Provinces to discuss any remedies that may be proposed, but it must be understood that the people of our Province must not be debarred, if these remedies are insufficient, to still seek relief by constitutional means in a withdrawal from the union. And hon. gentlemen call this disloyalty and incipient rebellion, and say those who met with them to seek how the discontent could be removed were "disloyal," "conspirators," "shaking hands with rebels." Where, I ask, was the true loyalty to the Dominion? Was it not with those who, recognising that such irritation and dissatisfaction must proceed from some cause, sought by conference and discussion to remove the irritation and consolidate the union, rather than with those who

WILFULLY SHUT THEIR EYES

and closed their ears to the representations made, and although respectfully invited to discuss these causes of dissatisfaction, refused to consider them? Was it not better to discuss causes of dissatisfaction and seek an equitable path for their removal than to allow that dissatisfaction to foster and grow under contemptuous indifference until it culminated in disruption, or through callous neglect drive a suffering people into rebellion, as was done in the Northwest. But these kid-gloved loyalty gentlemen would be contaminated, forsooth, by sitting at the same table with those who would even hint at such a thing as discussion. They could not tolerate that a man like Mr. Fielding or Mr. Longly should believe that his Province would thrive better as a separate Province, connected direct with the Empire through Downing street, as before Confederation, than under the sway of their benign, refined, honest, moral, truthful, red-breeched deity at Ottawa. It was intolerable that such a fellow should come between the wind and the nobility. Mr. Speaker, They were not always so squeamish. Their deity has not always frowned upon those who have threatened secession. Nor has he refused to