

which each he had treated so contemptuously. He thought the time of the conference was very ill-chosen, having regard to the character of the excitement prevailing or that was barely over in the Provinces of Quebec and Manitoba. He objected to Messrs. Fielding and Longley being members of a conference intended to consider such questions as were to come before it on account of their alleged leanings to Annexation. It had been claimed, he said, by Government speakers that the Reform press and the Independent press supported these resolutions. He denied this, and in support of his position quoted from a Toronto Conservative morning journal—(amid Government applause)—a condemnation of the resolutions. The hon. gentleman defended the Senate, but referring to the question of Disallowance, admitted that he was not satisfied with the present working of that portion of the British North America Act. He did not, however, agree with the proposal to allow it to revert to the Imperial Government, and quoted from THE GLOBE to show what a misfortune would be the revival of Downing street domination, which, he insisted, was bound to come about if the Imperial authorities secured the power of veto. The hon. gentleman said an aspersion had been cast on the ability of the members of the Dominion Cabinet, and in rebuttal of this charge he enumerated the good qualities of the various members of that body and added a tribute to the ability of Hon. Edward Blake and Hon. Alex. Mackenzie. The hon. gentleman closed by stating that the resolutions being presented to the House as a whole, he had no resource but to vote against them.

Mr. GARSON said he had been much pleased with the manner in which the Attorney-General had introduced the resolutions and would like to have seen the discussion continued from an independent standpoint; but the Opposition leader—after starting off with a brilliant description of Canada's position and prospects—soon descended to a prediction of blue ruin if the resolutions now before the House were adopted, and immediately

#### A POLITICAL DEBATE

was precipitated. The member for North Hastings had found fault with everything and everybody, but had carefully avoided giving his views upon anything. He had criticised all the resolutions, but had not shown where he would amend them. The Opposition speakers had called the veto power the corner-stone of Confederation, but if its use were to be continued as it had been, it could more properly be called a grindstone to sharpen political axes. He would have preferred the total abolition of the Senate to its continuance in any form. He dealt at length with the financial proposals of the conference, claiming that Ontario would be the gainer by them. He dealt also in a trenchant manner with the "loyalty" cry, and concluded by expressing the opinion that while Reformers and Conservatives both claimed the credit of encouraging national sentiment they had both to a certain extent defeated this end by mutual recriminations.

Mr. HARCOURT began by remarking upon

#### THE EXACT ACCURACY

and nice truthfulness of every statement contained in the Quebec resolutions. The hon. gentleman claimed that again and again judicial decisions had shown that the different clauses in the Act of Confederation was difficult of interpretation and was often misinterpreted. Surely it was reasonable that the Act should be made clear, and the real intentions of its framers carried out. The Attorney-General, in his opening address, stated that the resolutions were moderate in their tone and temperate in their language. He would promise the House to be very brief and would address himself alone to the first resolution, that regarding the question of disallowance. From the tenor of the speech of more than one gentleman opposite he would gather that the class of subjects assigned

#### TO THE PROVINCES EXCLUSIVELY

was inferior to those assigned to the Federal Government. He held that those of the former were of the greatest importance to every citizen. They could not therefore afford to be idle when these rights were being infringed upon by the Dominion. The attempt to do this at Ottawa had not been fitful but persistent. The resolution said that this power in the Federal authority might be arbitrarily used. Was not this temperate language? Did time allow he could point to the legislative volumes of every Province and prove this abundantly, that the power had been arbitrarily used, and that not seldom but frequently. The action of the Federal authorities in regard to the liquor laws was well known. The McCarthy Act had been pronounced by the highest authority to be ultra vires, while the legislation of the Province of Ontario had been held valid. Members of the Government side of the House claimed that they had strained their right of disallowance to the utmost. He referred to the Streams Bill, which was arbitrarily disallowed on two or three occasions. Nobody

could claim that that Bill affected a stream that was not in the Province. What, he would ask the hon. gentleman, would have been the result had the contention of Sir John Macdonald that the Province had no right to control her licenses been sustained? What would have been the result had his contention been sustained, that the Streams Bill should be disallowed? One by one all

#### THEIR RIGHTS WOULD HAVE GONE,

and the liberties and powers which the Province had so long enjoyed would have disappeared. His impeachment of the license legislation and his disallowance of the Streams Bill would have been but the commencement of an invasion of Provincial rights which would have ceased nobody knew where, but certainly in utter disaster to the Province. The Provinces had lost ground in regard to the interpretation of the power of disallowance since Sir John had written his celebrated State paper on the question of disallowance. In regard to great public works, the Province were not in as good a position as they were seventeen years ago. The Dominion Government had taken possession of all their railroads, and the Province had absolutely lost ground in that respect. He had never, until the member for London spoke, heard that the legislation of this House was perfect.

#### THERE SHOULD BE AN APPEAL,

and the question was to whom this appeal should be. In the first place there was the appeal to the people of this Province. This plan enlisted the interest of every ratepayer in this Province in what was going on in this Chamber. Under the union of the two Provinces joint control of the affairs of the individual Provinces was found to be injurious, and yet hon. gentlemen opposite claimed that, now that so many more Provinces had been added, the authorities at Ottawa were competent and should be entrusted with power to control the affairs of the individual Provinces. The tendency of the age was against centralisation and in favor of the extension of Local Government. A glance at any part of Europe would corroborate his statement. Again, was it not reasonable to suppose that the ninety members of this House knew what were the local wants of the various parts of the Province with which they were so well acquainted better than half a dozen gentlemen at Ottawa could know them? The great advantage of referring the veto power to the Imperial Government would be that the matter of political expediency, which entered so largely into the question of disallowance by the Dominion, would never affect the question of disallowance were the power vested with the Imperial authorities. Touching on "the loyalty cry," he would ask the attention of the hon. member for Toronto, who, he said, had raised this question, to a line that had been written by a celebrated English writer—Steele. It was this:—"There are those who think that they discharge every obligation which they owe to virtue when they praise it." This sentence seemed to him to apply very aptly to hon. gentlemen opposite who talked so much of loyalty. He concluded by expressing the hope that as to these important resolutions they might show the people of this Province that they could rise superior to party considerations.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT moved that the House do concur in these resolutions.

#### THE DISALLOWANCE RESOLUTION.

Mr. CREIGHTON moved in amendment:—

That the proposed mode of dealing with the disallowance of Provincial legislation involves the transfer to a body not responsible to the people of Canada. If powers now exercisable by a body which is responsible to them, and is otherwise objectionable, and ought not to be adopted.

The amendment was put and lost on the following division:—

YEAS.—Blyth, Clancy, Clarke, E. F. (Toronto), Clarke, H. E. (Toronto), Craig, Creighton, Cruess, Fell, French, Hammell, Hess, Hudson, Ingram, Kerns, Lees, Marter, Meacham, Meredith, Metcalfe, Miller, Monk, Morgan, Ostrom, Preston, Rorké, Stewart, Tooley, Whitney, Wood (Hastings), Wylie—30.

NAYS.—Allan, Armstrong, Awrey, Balfour, Ballantyne, Bishop, Blezard, Bronson, Chi-holm, Clarke (Northumberland), Clarke (Wellington), Conmee, Daek, Drury, Dryden, Evanturel, Ferguson, Field, Fraser, Freeman, Garson, Gibson (Hamilton), Gibson (Huron), Gilmour, Gould, Graham, Guthrie, Harecutt, Hardy, Leys, Lyon, McAndrew, McKay, McLaughlin, McMahon, Mack, Master, Morin, Mowat, Murray, Nairn, O'Connor, Pacaud, Phelps, Rayside, Robillard.

Ross (Huron), Ross (Middlesex), Smith, Snider, Stratton, Waters, Widdifield, Wood (Brant)—54.

#### THE SENATE.

Mr. WOOD (Hastings) moved in amendment:—

That the proposed plan of dealing with the constitution of the Senate of Canada does not afford a satisfactory solution of the objections urged to that body as it now exists under the provisions of the B. N. A. Act.

Hon. C. F. FRASER moved in amendment to the amendment:—

That there be added to the original motion these words:—That an humble address be presented to his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, requesting him to communicate to his Excellency the Governor-General and the Secretary of State the concurrence of this House in the said resolutions.

He said that ample opportunity had been given for discussion, and he thought that a vote should be taken upon the resolutions as a whole.

Mr. MEREDITH said he admired the courage of hon. gentlemen opposite. It was a most pitiable thing, in dealing with this important question, that hon. gentlemen should gag the members of the House and that nothing but this unauthorised compact should be placed before the House. To add to their cowardice they were proposing to deprive the Opposition of their constitutional right to move amendments.

Hon. Mr. HARDY, in replying, said his hon. friend seemed to feel a little sore over the castigations he had received on the previous day, and he did not wonder at it, for he was not used to receiving such treatment from the hands of the Hon. Treasurer, whose eloquent speech was a fitting reply to such a "bunkum" speech as had been that of the hon. leader of the Opposition. He thought there was no reason why the amendment of the Commission of Public Works should not be voted on a cncce.

Mr. Ingram and Mr. Creighton continued the discussion.

The House divided on Mr. Fraser's amendment, which was carried by 54 to 30, the division being the same as that upon Mr. Creighton's amendment reversed.

Mr. MEREDITH asked whether the carrying of Mr. Fraser's amendment precluded the moving of any further amendments.

The SPEAKER ruled that no further amendments could be moved.

The House adjourned at 12.40.