

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, March 19, 1868

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY

Several petitions were presented praying for the adoption of Major Robinson's route for the Intercolonial Railway.

RETURNS TO ADDRESSES

Hon. Mr. Langevin presented returns to several Addresses recently ordered by the House with reference to postal matters.

Hon. C. Dunkin called attention to the omission in the revised rules adopted by the House this Session of an addition ordered in 1865 to rule 22nd, providing that Bills referred after second reading to Committee of the Whole should be placed in the same precedence for their further stage as Bills referred to Select Committee, and with the consent of Hon. Mr. Cartier moved, seconded by Hon. Mr. Holton, the amendment of the rule by the addition of this omitted clause, which was put and carried.

DR. TUPPER'S MISSION TO ENGLAND

Hon. Mr. Holton asked if the Leader of the Government was now prepared to lay before the House the papers relating to the mission of Dr. Tupper and the correspondence with Mr. Galt.

Sir John A. Macdonald said he would explain to the House the circumstances connected with the appointment of Dr. Tupper and the declination of Mr. Galt. The House was aware that one branch—the popular branch—of the Legislature of Nova Scotia had adopted an Address to Her Majesty, praying for repeal of the Confederation Act so far as Nova Scotia was concerned. When this address was sent by the Lieutenant-Governor to the Governor-General to be transmitted through him to the Colonial Office, the question came before this Government to consider whether they should be content to await the answer of the

Colonial Office, or whether they should have some person on the spot to give all necessary information, and to answer any of the grounds of accession which might be pressed on the Imperial Government. The Government thought it would prejudice the cause they had so much at heart if there was any unnecessary delay in the answer of the Imperial Government to the address, in consequence of the Colonial Secretary, from the absence of information on the spot, having to communicate with the Government of Canada before a final answer was given. Any such delay they considered would be prejudicial to the interests of all concerned, of the Dominion as well as of Nova Scotia, by disturbing the working of the legislative machine here, and throwing discredit generally upon the Confederation. They also hoped that if, after calm consideration, the Home Government could not see any ground to rescind the recent legislation on the subject of Union, perhaps the people of Nova Scotia would accept loyally and frankly that answer, and adapting themselves to the circumstances of the case, would join the rest of the Dominion by legislation and administration of affairs to forward the common interest of all. They, therefore, thought it wise and prudent to send to England some person fully informed of all the facts. They thought it inexpedient to send a member of the Government, chiefly for the reason that from such a step it might be inferred that the Government of Canada acquiesced that repeal of the Union was a subject for discussion. They had come to the conclusion that the right person to send would be the member for Cumberland. He regretted to see statements in the press that the selection of Dr. Tupper might be construed as an act of hostility to Nova Scotia. He had only to say that the Government had made that selection in no spirit of hostility. The member for Cumberland was chiefly responsible, as head of the local administration, for the resolutions of the Legislature of Nova Scotia which formed the ground for the passage of the Union Act in the Imperial Parliament. The address for the repeal of the Act of Union proceeded from the Nova Scotia point of view, and could only be answered

in all its details from a Nova Scotia point of view. They had thought it also an act of justice to the member for Cumberland, whose personal honour and veracity were attacked, that he should be in England to vindicate his course. The Government had asked the member for Sherbrooke if he would join with the member for Cumberland in that mission. If he had accepted the appointment there would have been associated with Dr. Tupper a very able man, fully acquainted with all the circumstances at issue from the Nova Scotia point of view, and also able to speak to the Colonial Office from the Dominion point of view. He much regretted that Mr. Galt declined to go, giving as his reason that he could not hope to be of much service by going with Dr. Tupper, whose selection might be construed as being in opposition to the feelings of the people of Nova Scotia. They endeavoured to combat this view, but he was sorry to say Mr. Galt persisted in it. They did not, however, on this account consider themselves justified in withdrawing the confidence they had formerly reposed in the member for Cumberland, whom they looked upon as peculiarly suited for the mission, being better acquainted than any other man that could be suggested with the whole facts of relating to the question, so far as regarded Nova Scotia, and being as well acquainted as any other could be with the facts from a Dominion point of view. He would not in any way come into collision with the Nova Scotia delegates. They had no authority to treat with him, and his mission would be exclusively to the Colonial Office; that if called upon, he might give information on any points on which it might be required. Sir John A. Macdonald then read the Order-in-Council and Mr. Galt's letter:

On a memorandum, dated 12th March, 1868, from the honourable the Minister of Justice, stating that having had under consideration the action of the Local Legislature of Nova Scotia in sending to England a deputation for the purpose of pressing upon Her Majesty's Government the necessity of repealing the Union Act, so far as Nova Scotia is concerned, he recommends that some competent person be sent to England for the purpose of affording, when required, to His Grace the Secretary of State for the Colonies, full information on the various grounds for such repeal that may be submitted by the Nova Scotia delegates. The Committee concur in the recommendation submitted by the Minister of Justice, and advise that a competent person be authorized to proceed to England for the purpose mentioned.

Sir John A. Macdonald also read the following letter addressed to Mr. Cartier by Mr. [Sir John A. Macdonald (Kingston).]

Galt, in which that gentleman declined the proffered appointment as co-delegate with Dr. Tupper:—

"The Hon. G. E. Cartier,
Executive Council.

Ottawa, 16th March, 1868

"Dear Cartier—I have given my best consideration to the proposal you have made to me on behalf of the Government, to undertake a mission to England on the subject of the Nova Scotia difficulty, in association with Dr. Tupper. While I would gladly put my services at the disposal of the Government in any way calculated to consolidate the Union, still I am obliged to consider how far the circumstances connected with the proposed mission bear upon the prospect of a useful result—and I must frankly say that I consider the situation of Dr. Tupper is calculated, in the present temper of Nova Scotia, so far to diminish the possibility of success, that I do not believe I could myself be of any service. I beg, therefore, that you will express to the Council my acknowledgements for the proposal, at the same time that I feel myself obliged very respectfully to decline it.

Believe me,
My dear Cartier,
Yours faithfully,

(Signed) A. T. Galt.

Hon. Mr. Holton said he had understood the other day from the Leader of the Government that he would bring down a copy of the instructions given to Dr. Tupper.

Sir John A. Macdonald said the instructions to Dr. Tupper were simply to go to London and place himself in communication with the Colonial Minister. There were no other instructions except what were implied in the Order-in-Council, which he had read.

Hon. Mr. Dorion said the facts, as he understood them, were that the Minister of Justice on the 12th March recommended the appointment of Dr. Tupper to go to England, and that after the selection of Dr. Tupper a request was made to Mr. Galt to accompany him, which Mr. Galt had declined, for the reasons very clearly and forcibly stated in his letter. The Government had two courses which they might have followed—one was a course of conciliation towards the public opinion of Nova Scotia; the other was the reverse of this—and that was the course which it seemed to him they had adopted. By the appointment of Dr. Tupper they had assumed the responsibility of all the quarrels and bitterness of feeling which, during a long contest, had existed between Dr. Tupper and (he might say) almost the whole people of Nova Scotia, who would look on the appointment of Dr. Tupper as an insult, and as an indication that the Government were disposed to adopt the views which Dr. Tupper

might press upon them with regard to the treatment of Nova Scotia. They would consider that the influence of Dr. Tupper in the councils of the Dominion was greater than the influence of the whole people of Nova Scotia, and would be more estranged and more disposed to offer resistance to the Union than ever before. He thought the man worst calculated to represent the Dominion of Canada on such a mission, if there was any desire to conciliate Nova Scotia, was Dr. Tupper. The Premier said one reason why Dr. Tupper was selected was, that he was the prime mover of Confederation, so far as Nova Scotia was concerned. But that was the very reason why in Nova Scotia he was held to be a traitor. The Premier said Dr. Tupper was the best man to represent Nova Scotia, and a capital man to represent the Dominion. If so, where was the necessity of asking Mr. Galt to accompany him? Was he merely to be the acolyte, the aid and assistant to Dr. Tupper? He was not surprised that Mr. Galt should have declined such a secondary position, and should have refused to mix himself up in the quarrels between Dr. Tupper and the delegates from Nova Scotia. He thought the appointment a most unfortunate one. It would have been much better to have selected a gentleman entirely unconnected with the quarrels and difficulties between the representatives of Nova Scotia. Perhaps the best man who could have been selected for such a mission, if he had gone alone, would have been Mr. Galt, whose abilities and conciliatory manner would have well qualified him for such a task.

Mr. Mackenzie said it was with feelings of great regret that he felt compelled to take part in a discussion which must necessarily raise a question as to permanence of the Union of the British Provinces. He thought we could not in this age of the world adopt any policy which would have for its object or result the coercion of any people. (Hear, hear.) He found no fault with the Government for sending a deputation to England. The only question in his mind was whether the choice made of Dr. Tupper was a wise one or not. There was, no doubt, an advantage in having a deputy who was well acquainted with the whole controversy in Nova Scotia, but the matter in dispute could not be settled by an argument before the Imperial Government as to who was right or who was wrong in that controversy. (Hear, hear.) He thought, however, the choice of Dr. Tupper was an unwise one, and that it would have

been better to have chosen one well known to have been a strong friend of the Union, and at the same time not personally obnoxious by the course he had pursued in bringing about the Union. In any discussion to which the present attitude of Nova Scotia might give rise, he held it to be the duty of every true patriot to use only such arguments and such language as might have a tendency to soothe the feeling of anger and discontent which now prevailed to so great an extent in the Province of Nova Scotia. He regretted exceedingly that the Government had not chosen to take advice of the gentlemen on his side, who, though opposed to the Government, were not opposed to them in this matter, and that they had set aside the advice he had himself tendered them both publicly and privately to avoid these measures which would be construed by the people of the Lower Provinces into fresh causes of discontent. If this advice had been followed during the first part of this, the first Parliamentary session of the Dominion, he was satisfied we would not have seen the agitation in Nova Scotia carried to its present pitch, but the tendency of a number of the laws passed in the early part of the session had unfortunately been to increase the discontent. The true course for the Government to adopt now, would be frankly to admit the mistake into which they had fallen, and to take measures to remedy it by removing what were felt to be serious grievances in the Province of Nova Scotia, and to some extent also in the Province of New Brunswick.

Hon. Mr. Cartier regretted that the honourable member for Hochelaga had not adopted such a line of arguments as the honourable member for Lambton. Dr. Tupper had not been sent home to take part in any discussion, but simply to afford the Imperial Government, if they should desire it, information upon the facts upon representation of which they had consented to the Act of Union. It was due to Dr. Tupper, who was in a great measure responsible for the passing of the measure, to give him the opportunity of such explanation, and it was due to the British Government that he should be there to answer for the advice he had then given. There was no possibility of political collision with the delegation. He asserted that no effort on the part of the Government would be wanting to assure Nova Scotia of the advantage of the Federation, and said that it was only by frankly and freely and fearlessly expressing the opinions of all parties that conciliation could be rendered possible.

Mr. Savary had hoped that a more satisfactory answer would have been given by the Government to the interrogations of the honourable member for Chateauguay. He had hoped that it might turn out that Dr. Tupper had been sent home upon some other mission, the Intercolonial Railway, or the North-West Territory, for example. But although he could not congratulate the Government on their policy in sending him as they had—and, indeed, the policy of the Government was entirely a matter of indifference to him—he might regard it as an example of the fitness of things. It was not politic, because it was not possible that Dr. Tupper could have any effect in counteracting the unanimous wishes of his people with the Imperial Government, whom he had previously, by false representations, so grossly deceived, but it was perhaps fit that a man who could not traverse his own Province with personal safety should be sent for security 3,000 miles away (oh, oh!) He repeated that such was the state of exasperation against him in Nova Scotia, that he could not dare to go from Halifax to his own county, and that it was therefore well to send him home for protection. It was not he (Mr. S.), nor yet Mr. Howe, who was responsible for the excitement that prevailed. It was Dr. Tupper himself, the man who had laid the axe to the root of British prosperity on this continent, and had destroyed the prospect of one of the most flourishing colonies of the Crown. The choice by the Government of such a man for such a mission had confirmed in perpetuity the discontent of which he was the cause. What steps had the Government, in its paternal care, taken to allay this discontent? So far from doing anything whatever on this direction they had here deliberately put all prospect of compromise out of the question. He was glad, but not surprised, to find that Mr. Galt had refused indignantly to accompany Dr. Tupper, an association by which he would have been disgraced. There had been once good feeling towards Canada on the part of Nova Scotia, in the belief that not Canadian but their own statesmen were responsible for their injuries, but that had been killed in this appointment of the man who had been used for years, as the tool by which Union might be effected, to attempt to counteract the unanimous desires of his own people. The Union had been originally proposed for the purpose of ameliorating, not Nova Scotian, but Canadian difficulties. Nova Scotia had been labouring peacefully, contentedly and loyally to work out its constitu-

[Hon. Mr. Cartier (Montreal East).]

tion, but when a section of Canada unreasonably clamored for representation by population it was sought to drag in Nova Scotia to preserve the balance. For this purpose every species of corruption had been resorted to, and many members corruptly used for that purpose now enjoyed their ill-earned reward! Crime and madness were closely allied, and it was but natural that upon the crime of the creation of Union should have followed the madness of its subsequent conduct. The administration had been guilty of every folly that was possible, and one more Session of such a course would render New Brunswick as disaffected as Nova Scotia. He had heard of the lion and the lamb lying down together, and it might be possible that the lion of Canada and the lamb of Nova Scotia would yet do so, but they would have to look for another little child to lead them. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. Stewart Campbell regretted that the affairs of Nova Scotia seemed to be entering as largely into the discussion of this, as the former part of the session. He had hoped when the Legislature of that Province, whether in its wisdom or its folly, had resolved to send a delegation across the water to ask repeal of the Union, that pending the answer of the British Government, the representatives of Nova Scotia here would have been content to have left the question to be disposed of on that side of the water, and not introduced the agitation again into this Legislature. He thought appointment of Dr. Tupper a wise one, as it was necessary that a person possessing full information should be on the other side to communicate whatever facts might be necessary to the British Government. He had heard the word "conciliation" frequently used today. He thought it was out of place. The question was Repeal or No Repeal. Of conciliation there could be none. The member for Digby had said something with reference to the responsibility for the present excitement. He (Mr. Campbell) heard that a certain clique or league in the City of Halifax was entirely responsible for the irritation which existed. The identity of the resolutions passed at different points throughout the Province, showed that they emanated from a common source. The treatment which had been given to one of those resolutions showed the value which might be attached to the whole of them. Among the resolutions passed in almost every county of the Province was one which declared that the representatives of Nova Scotia in this Par-

liament should not attend and take their places here this session. If that resolution could be abrogated by these gentlemen, as they were now abrogating it, he asked what value could be put on the rest of the resolutions. These gentlemen, in taking their seats here, furnished the best evidence possible of the little weight they attached to the opinion of the people of Nova Scotia, as expressed by these resolutions. The address which had gone home emanated not from both branches of the Legislature, but from one branch, and could not therefore be regarded as a constitutional expression of the views and opinions of the people of Nova Scotia. Mr. Campbell then referred to the tendency of this agitation, as shown by the advocacy of annexation principles by an anti-Union newspaper, and by a gentleman who was prominent at the anti-Union newspaper, and by a gentleman who was prominent at the anti-Union meetings having hoisted the American flag on the 1st July last. For himself, when a Confederation of the Provinces became the law of the land, he had felt it his duty as a British subject to yield his assent to it, and whatever might be said of him for doing so, it was an act which he had never regretted, and which he hoped he never would regret.

Dr. Parker, in reference to Mr. Campbell's statement that the resolutions by simply one branch of the Legislature of Nova Scotia were not a constitutional expression of opinion by that Province, remarked that frequently the most dangerous utterances of public sentiments were unconstitutionally expressed. If the appeal to Great Britain failed, it would be considered as due to the influence of this Government, and the people of Nova Scotia should then have a quarrel not only with the British Government, but with this Government. He thought a more unfortunate selection than that of Dr. Tupper could not have been made. It could only have the effect of increasing the irritation in Nova Scotia. He believed this House would not do its duty if it did not address His Excellency expressing its disapproval of this step, and thereby setting itself right with the people of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Coffin said the strength of the opinion of Nova Scotia against the Union had not been exaggerated, and he considered that any one who found himself so strongly in opposition to the sentiments of his constituents as an honourable gentleman who had spoken to-day (Mr. Campbell), ought to place his resignation in their hands, and allow them to

elect a man who would truly represent them. He looked upon the selection of Dr. Tupper for this mission as an act most offensive to Nova Scotia. Reference had been made to a resolution that the members from Nova Scotia should not attend here. No such resolution had been passed in his county, although it was as strongly hostile to the Union as any part of the Province. For his own part, he believed that in justice to their own Province, it was their duty to be here. He thought this present discussion showed the advantage of their being here, to represent Nova Scotia's opinion.

Hon. Mr. Huntington said that everyone must regret the discussion which he was not going to prolong by entering into the question as to who was responsible for the excitement. He would only point out that it would have answered much better if Nova Scotia quarrels had been left to take care of themselves, and if the Nova Scotia Opposition, if such existed, had been permitted to send home Dr. Tupper to explain their views, and to represent at Downing Street the mis-statements of the majority. The Government, by undertaking to look after the Nova Scotia Opposition, and by employing Dr. Tupper as their representative had identified themselves with the Nova Scotia quarrel. But he believed that the real reason by which they were actuated was a desire to give Dr. Tupper a position. It was well known that neither the Minister for Justice, nor the Minister of Militia ever deserted a friend, and they had here allowed personal considerations to outweigh public policy. If it had been necessary for Mr. Galt to go as specially representing the Dominion, why had there not been some one else sent in his place when he had refused? It would be easy to make this matter for attack upon the Government in their having failed to educate Nova Scotian opinion, but it was no fit subject for partizanship, and, where all had the same objects at heart though from different points of view, they should remember the grand old principle of the sentiment "Our country, may she always be right, but, right or wrong our country!" The honourable member for Guysboro' had said that he did not believe in conciliation, but he held that a statesman who would now come down with such a scheme as would conciliate the country would rank higher than any of those by whom Union had been first brought about. He deplored the spectacle we had presented of gentlemen who had lost the confidence of the

people, being taken up and protected by the Government. The mere fact that Ministers were desirous of conciliation was useless, unless some better proof than after-dinner speeches were given of such a desire. We should take warning for the error in Government which had to-day made Ireland the standing Nemesis of England, and should take care that we did not take upon our hands a second Ireland by persisting in a policy which, however honest, is mistaken and aggravating.

Mr. Blake was one of those who believed this Union could not be maintained if there existed a permanent feeling of discontent in any considerable portion of any of the Provinces now united, and his opinion was there would be little use in attempting to prolong such an unwilling Union. This being the case, the action of the Government in this matter was unfortunate, as it tended to influence ill feeling in one of the Provinces. As to the legislation of the early part of the session, leaving out the case of Nova Scotia and looking only to New Brunswick, what was the result of it in that Province? That a strong feeling had grown up against it there—that bad as things were before, they had become ten times worse. To what was this to be attributed? To the legislation of last session which was inflicted on those people. The House was told the flour tax was of little consequence to those people. But, clearly, the interest of the Dominion did not demand the imposition of the tax, and the people of Nova Scotia were strongly averse to it—and what he held was that when the almost unanimous feeling in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia was declared to be against that measure, as one calculated to do mischief, it should not have been imposed. It had been imposed, and by that legislation the Dominion had been seriously compromised. The wishes of the representatives of the Maritime Provinces had been disregarded in the matter. Faith had not, it was held, been kept with the people of those Provinces, and hence the strong feelings excited against a Union in which their wishes were not respected. Then came the action of the Government in sending home an envoy to enter into a strife for the maintenance of the Union Act. In arriving at that conclusion the Government ought to have sought to take action in as conciliatory a mode as possible. But the delegate chosen by this professionally conciliatory Government, sent home to argue the

[*Mr. Huntington (Shefford).*]

cause of Union, a man who, rightly or wrongly, was held by the Nova Scotians to be a traitor to his country—the man who was primarily responsible for the present state of affairs in that Province against which its inhabitants protested. While he (**Mr. Blake**) should have been disposed in every way possible to allow **Dr. Tupper** to go and defend himself, he (**Mr. Blake**) utterly denied that **Dr. Tupper** should have been sent as the envoy of Canada. By the Order-in-Council it was said **Dr. Tupper** went home simply to give and receive information on the subject; but he (**Mr. Blake**) was mistaken if the people of Nova Scotia would not be convinced **Dr. Tupper** was sent home to thoroughly espouse that cause which was so distasteful to them. He (**Mr. Blake**) therefore regretted that this course, rightly characterized as one of folly, should have been taken by the Ministry.

Mr. T. R. Ferguson denied that after the statements made here no conciliation would be accepted by Nova Scotia short of absolute repeal, it could be fairly supposed that any other delegate who might be selected would give greater satisfaction to the Anti-Union party. This party had no real grounds for their opposition, but had made complaints of their position before any legislation had taken place here at all. It had been shown clearly that, even if Union had never taken place at all, additional Nova Scotia taxation would have been inevitable, but now the very flour tax, which had been imposed upon them by their own Legislature without remonstrance, had been made a monstrous grievance when the representatives of the other Provinces agreed to share it themselves. This flour tax, amounting only to \$25 upon \$1,000, was no greater burden upon trade than that borne willingly by tavern keepers here. The loyalty that fled from such an imposition to annexation with the United States was not very strong. The Government had, in the early part of the Session, stated that they were prepared to consider some modifications in this intolerable tariff, but without waiting for any announcement of their intentions in this direction, they had uttered protests here of the indifference displayed to their desires. For his part, if they were determined to insist upon being permitted to enjoy the misfortune of separation from the Dominion, he for one would not be inclined to use any tyranny to retain them, but would permit them to live contentedly at home without any Intercolonial Railway or other advantages to be derived from their connection with the other Provinces. He did not at all believe that New

Brunswick would follow their misguided example. He considered Dr. Tupper the best man who could possibly be chosen to lay a statement of the whole position before Her Majesty's Ministers, and he never supported the Government more heartily or thoroughly than upon the present occasion.

Mr. Ross derided the idea of sending to England, on such a mission, a man once having a large number of followers in Nova Scotia, but now so unpopular that he came to the House without a single follower from that section. The people of Nova Scotia were formerly committed against Confederation. Seventeen of the representatives of that Province in the Dominion had signed petitions to the Imperial Government in favour of repeal, and the result would show that it would be just as well Nova Scotia should be let go at once. Nothing but complete separa-

tion would satisfy them. Even if the mission to England failed, it would only make the people of Nova Scotia more united and determined to follow out this object to the end. It was not merely the flour grievance of which they complained. Their whole tariff had been increased from 10 to 15 per cent—a rate which had never before been known in Nova Scotia. Postage had been imposed on newspapers, and now even their currency was proposed to be changed. So far, every act of the Government of the Dominion, as far as Nova Scotia was concerned, had a tendency to irritate and increase the feeling against Union, and none of the measures which had been passed had a tendency to advance the interests of that Province.

—It being six o'clock, the **Speaker rose and** declared the House adjourned.
