… save the … y would ever … he had embarked in … with a full knowledge of the tre… … odds against us; but with the approval of a just Providence, which he conscientiously believed was on our side, and the united resolve of our people, he doubted not that victory would crown our labors. He concluded by exhorting those who are able to bear arms, to unite with those already in the army in repelling the foe, believing that thereby we would compel the Yankees in less than twelve months to petition us for peace on our own terms.

At the conclusion of President Davis' speech, Governor Smith arose and read the following preamble and resolutions *seriatim*, which were unanimously adopted as the sentiment of the meeting.

"Whereas the commonwealth of Virginia, in concert with other American states, did, in the year 1776, solemnly set forth that when any form of government becomes destructive of the happiness or dangerous to the liberties of the people, it is the right and the duty of the people to alter or abolish it; in pursuance whereof they did declare themselves independent states; and whereas her separate independence and that of the coacting states were afterward acknowledged by the world; and whereas Virginia did subsequently form, with other states, a common agency, for the management of their foreign affairs, and other specified general purposes, which said common government or agency received no other further recognition by foreign powers than as the representative of the several state sovereignties already recognized; and whereas Virginia, in entering into this association or federation, did expressly reserve for herself, and therefore for her co-states, the right which attached to the act itself of resuming the powers granted whensoever the same might be perverted to their injury or oppression; and whereas the commonwealth of Virginia did, in sovereign convention, in April, 1861, decide and determine that the circumstances had arrived which made it her imperative duty, as it was her indisputable right, to withdraw from the association known as the United States of America, and resume her separate sovereignty; and whereas this, her legitimate act, has been followed by an atrocious war upon her, and upon the states with which she subsequently formed a new confederation, by the states from which she and they withdrew, for the purpose of subjecting her and them to the absolute and tyrannical domination of the United States; and whereas, after four years of hostilities, conducted, on the part of our enemies, with a barbarity equalled only by the wickedness of their designs, their authorities did invite a conference, with a view to the establishment of peace, which invitation was responded to by the confederate authorities; and whereas it appears, from the report of the confederate commissioners to said conference, that it was declared on the part of our enemies, that nothing should terminate the existing war but our unconditional submission to their yoke and acknowledgment of their absolute authority; that their laws for the confiscation of our property and execution of our citizens should be enforced by judges and other officers whom they would appoint for that purpose; that the only palliation of our wretchedness should be the voluntary mercy of those who for four years have murdered our people and ravaged our homes; that our social system shall be immediately upturned, and hereafter regulated at their will; that the uniform which our soldiers have made so honourable must be stripped from their persons, and the flag, under which they have so often marched to victory, must be trailed in the dust and thrown away forever; therefore be it

"*Resolved*, That we, the citizens here assembled, do spurn with the indignation due to so gross an insult the terms on which the President of the United States has proffered peace to the people of the Confederate States.

"*Resolved*, That the circumstances under which that proffer has been made add to the outrage, and stamp it as a designed and premeditated indignity to our people.

"*Resolved*, That our profoundest gratitude is due to the soldiers who, for four years, have maintained our liberties against the utmost efforts of our enemies; and that, while we look to them to illustrate in the future the fame of the past, we will sustain their efforts by every means and resource at our command.

"*Resolved*, That in this presence, and in the face of the world, reverently invoking thereto the aid of Almighty God, we renew our resolve to maintain our liberties and independence; and to this we mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

SHERMAN'S WHEREABOUTS.—The telegraph reports Sherman to have been at Camden, S. C., on Saturday last. This is a flourishing town, in the Kershaw District, situated on the bank of the Wateree river, 33 miles north of Columbia, 142 miles N. by W. of Charleston. The river is navigable for steamboats to this place. Camden is surrounded by a fertile district, in which cotton and maize flourish, or did once flourish, in abundance. It contains an academy, an arsenal, a bank and four or five churches. There are, likewise, two or three cotton factories in the vicinity. Camden, the reader of Carolina history may remember, is the scene of the battle fought during the revolutionary war (Aug. 1780) between Gen. Gates and Lord Cornwallis. Also, of a second battle in the following year between Gen. Greene and Lord Rawdon. Sherman, hence, is on classic ground.

FRANCE AND MEXICO.

Le Nord says:—"There was a meeting of the Privy Council on the 4th in Paris, and we are informed that the affairs of America and the connection they may have with the Mexican empire formed the principal object of the meeting. France is not without some uneasiness as to the attitude the United States may assume toward the new empire, when the conclusion of the war has placed at the disposal of the republic a large and tried army, with numerous and skilled officers, and a four years' struggle has changed a state, hitherto exclusively devoted to commercial and maritime interests, into a military state, disposing of immense forces. The recent resolutions of the Washington Senate must have assisted in increasing this uneasiness. Nevertheless, according to the correspondent, the discussion in which the Privy Council was engaged ended in this resolution—that for the moment it would be wrong to give way to exaggerated fears; and that, in the face of the pacific and conciliatory assurances which American diplomacy continues to give, the best course to adopt is to abstain provisionally from all movements, without, however, indulging in a false security."

The Halifax *Chronicle* of the 1st instant says: We learn by a communication kindly furnished by J. Dunsier Tremain, Esq., agent at Port Hood for the Board of Underwriters at New York, that the brig previously reported in the ice near the former place was boarded by two men, on the 24th ult. They nearly lost their lives in the attempt, as the ice, before their return, had parted from the shore, and drifted Northward, carry them to Cape Mabou, where they were taken off by a boat. They had been on the ice one night and a part of the day without food. The brig is new, without anchors, cables, rudder boat or ballast; and is only partly rigged. It is stated that about two and a half months ago she was driven out of some harbor or river in Prince Edward Island. The men on board, five in all, were well and not suffering, but were getting short of provisions. They expect, when the ice moves, to get either to the Strait of Canso, or back to P. E. Island

… s- … as … House … amounted to … appointment of the

COMMITTEES:

… prepare an Address in answer to His Excellency's Speech — Hon. Messrs. Beer, Palmer and Walker.

On expiring Laws—Hons. Messrs. Palmer, McDonald and Goff.

To receive tenders for printing the Journal of this House—Hon. Messrs. Beer, Goff and Dingwell.

To revise the Journal—Hon. Messrs. Walker and Henderson.

On engrossed bills—Hon. Messrs. McDonald and Beer.

To make arrangements for the publication of the debates and proceedings of this House —Hon. Messrs. McDonald and Beer.

Mr. James Ramsay was appointed Reporter to this House for the present session.

"*Resolved*, That the postage on all letters and printed papers, both foreign and inland, to members of this House, and the postage on the same when inland only, from members of this House, shall be charged to the contingent accounts of the House."

The Council then adjourned until to-morrow at three o'clock, p. m.

WEDNESDAY, March 1, 1865.

Hon. Mr. Beer presented a petition of divers inhabitants of Squaw Bay, Lot 49, stating that the present School Act was unsuitable to the circumstances of the people, and that they found it impossible to comply with its provisions. Unsuitable, inasmuch as it imposed too heavy a burden on the poor man with a large family, while the rich man often went free; and impossible to be complied with, because the average daily attendance of scholars required by the Act could not be kept up in the greater number of the school districts—praying that the Act might be amended and that the full amount of the teachers' salaries might be paid directly from the Treasury, and also that the schools might be supplied with books, &c., by some compulsory means. Petition laid on the table.

Adjourned till to-morrow at eleven o'clock.

THURSDAY, March 2.

Hon. Mr. Beer, chairman of the committee appointed to prepare an an address in answer to His Excellency's speech at the opening of the present Session, reported the following draft thereof, which was received and read a first time:—

To His Excellency GEORGE DUNDAS, ESQUIRE, *Lieutenant Governor, &c. &c.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY;

We, the members of the Legislative Council, in our legislative capacity convened, request that your Excellency will receive our thanks for the Speech delivered by you at the opening of the present Session.

It affords us much happiness in accepting your Excellency's congratulation on the general prosperity of this Island, and we cordially unite with your Excellency in an expression of gratitude to Almighty God for the abundant harvest, amongst other blessings, which have been bestowed on the people of this Colony during the past year.

Your Excellency, in compliance with the resolution passed last Session, having appointed delegates to confer with delegates appointed by the Governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick on the subject of a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces, we will respectfully receive from your Excellency the correspondence on this subject, together with the Report of the Conference of the Delegates.

There having been a second Conference to consider the wider question of a General Union of the British North American Provinces, and your Excellency having nominated delegates to proceed from this Island to attend such second Conference at Quebec, we will be prepared to receive a copy of the Resolutions adopted at this Conference, as well as the despatches on this subject from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, so soon as your Excellency will be pleased to cause them to be laid before us.

The momentous question to which these documents relate shall receive our earnest consideration.

It is very gratifying to learn that the Volunteer movement in this Colony has called forth the approbation of the Colonial Minister.

We shall be ready to take into our consideration the efficiency of the Militia Laws at present in force in this Colony, and to give our careful attention to any measure submitted to us which may be calculated to obviate those objections to them which have attracted the attention of the Colonial Minister.

Deeply sensible of the vast importance of Agriculture, as the first of the resources of this Colony, we will readily concur in any reasonable measure to promote its further encouragement, and the improvement of the Stock and the Soil of the Colony.

The House then went into committee on the above draft address,—Hon. Mr. Goff in the chair.

The first four clauses were agreed to without any discussion.

Fifth clause—

Hon. Mr. LORD: I would not support that clause if I thought it would render it binding upon me to vote for a bill to authorise the calling out of the Militia for the purpose of being drilled. Under the present law, the Militia may be called out in case of war, civil commotion, or other sufficient emergency, and I think that is sufficient. Why call the inhabitants of the Island away from their proper avocations to spend several days in drilling when it is not required? That was the case under the old Militia law, but it was found to be oppressive, without any corresponding benefit, and was therefore repealed.

Hon. ATTY. GENERAL: That appears to be the most prominent paragraph in the Speech, with the exception of the one relating to the Conference on the Union of the Colonies, but the answer does not oblige the House to accede to any alteration in the Militia law upon any defined principle. It merely says we will give our utmost attention to the measure. I am not prepared to say at present what measure will be laid before the House, or to what extent alterations are proposed to be made; but I can imagine of what nature they are likely to be. I so far agree with the Secretary of State, that our Militia laws are very inefficient, and without a parallel in any of the British Colonies. And though it may be an unpopular measure—though we may be unwilling to pass any stringent or burdensome Militia Law—yet I fear the time has come when it is necessary to see that our Militia laws are put upon a sound basis. At present they impose no burden upon the people; but every part of the British realm is supposed to be under an obligation to contribute towards its own defence; and it is our obligation that each man should do his share of defending his country. And if all the neighbouring Colonies have thought it necessary to put their Militia laws on an efficient basis, I do not see how this Island is to claim any exemption I think it would be good policy, especially at the present time, to take up those laws and show the Mother Country our good disposition—show that we are not disposed to shirk our share of the responsibility of defending our country. By showing a disposition of that kind, it may go far to prevent the British Government from imposing something more burdensome and objectionable upon the people. I think it would be wise policy now, when it is said that great changes are soon to be brought, about to leave no cause for complaint of that kind against the colony. Better to accede to a little increased taxation, or put up with a little inconvenience now, than have a more burdensome and intolerant measure imposed upon us for all time to come I would advise the House to act in a spirit of patriotism, and show that we do not wish to be behind our neighbors in doing our part.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON: I would not wish to anticipate any remarks which the bill might call forth; but, independent of that measure, … al Minister's Despatch … without considering that Despatch, … y one who looks with a discriminating eye at our Militia laws must see that they present an anomaly and loudly call for amendment. What is the Militia law as it stands at present? It simply gives permission to the Lieutenant Governor to call out the Militia in case of emergency, such as invasion or civil commotion. That law assumes that the Militia are in such an efficient state of organization that they may be called out at any time for active service, and it therefore assumes what is not a fact. It assumes that every Captain knows his company, and that the men know their officers, which I am sure is not the case. On the other hand I believe that the very reverse is the fact. You might as well leave Charlottetown without a fire company or fire engines, and say it is sufficient to call out the people when a fire takes place. What has experience taught us? What has been the result of neglecting to anticipate danger in this respect? It has been the destruction of property far beyond the expense that would have been incurred in making suitable provision to prevent the calamity. From my knowledge of military matters, and I think I should have some knowledge of them, I may say that it would be utterly useless to call out a lot of undisciplined men to oppose an invading army. They would only be in each other's way. Do any of your honors, or do merchants, for instance, act on the principles which you suppose to be sufficient in this case? A merchant would not fail to insure his property against loss, and thereby take the most direct way to prevent the loss of thousands of pounds by the payment of a small sum. We should act upon the same principle. We should carefully consider our Militia laws and endeavour to put them upon a sound and efficient basis.

Hon. Mr. DINGWELL: I do not apprehend such immediate danger as his honor who has just spoken. I hope the day is far distant when there will be a necessity for calling out the Militia—the day when this or any other House will be under the necessity of passing a Militia law which would entail any additional expense or trouble upon the people. I expect this House will consider the interests of the labouring community, and not pass any law which would cause trouble and expense to the people. I have seen a great deal of trouble and expense incurred by calling out the Militia under the old law, without any corresponding benefit; and the repeal of that law, which was found necessary has been a great benefit to the people. I have seen men come a few minutes too late to the place of drill, and an arbitrary captain would have them fined or punished in some other way, and the same might occur again; but it is our duty to guard the interests of the people, and I know there is good sense enough in this building not to impose unnecessary trouble upon them.

Hon. Mr. LORD: It is all very well for us to express our opinion, but we must remember that the Government will have something to do with framing the measure; yet it is our duty, as far as it lies in our power, to guard against imposing unnecessary trouble and expense upon the people. We have heard a good deal from his honor from the first district of Queen's County (Mr. Henderson) about insuring ships, and other matters quite irrelevant to the subject; but I am glad that gentleman has spoken, and I presume that he has expressed the opinion of the Government. And I dare say his honor, who has seen so much service, will use all his influence to get a very stringent measure passed.

Hon. the PRESIDENT: I do not think it is worth while to occupy the time of the House in discussing this question now, or that it is any use to anticipate the measure that is likely to come before us When the bill comes before us we will give it our earnest consideration. The present Militia law is certainly an anomaly; and under the old Militia law the people were called out more for a spree than anything else, owing to the fact that there were no proper drill officers provided, and it was therefore thought better to leave them at home. I do not think the people would object to being called out for drill if suitable officers were provided for that purpose.

Hon. Mr. BEER: I shall be satisfied to express my opinion on this subject when the bill comes before the House, as I think it is premature to enter into a discussion on this subject just now. I would not support any measure which I thought would impose unnecessary trouble and expense upon the people.

Hon Mr. DINGWELL: It may be time enough to discuss this subject when the bill comes before us, but I hope your Honors will allow more time for the consideration of the bill than you have allowed to consider this address.

Clause agreed to.

Sixth Clause read.—

Hon. Mr. MCDONALD: Respecting that clause I would merely remark that I am very glad that the Government have taken up the question of agriculture, or the encouragement of the agricultural industry of the country. It was always considered by the late liberal Government to be a question of the first importance to the Colony, and they expended a very large amount in the importation of stock, in the purchase and working of the model farm, and in the encouragement of agriculture in various ways. Though the money was not as judiciously expended as it probably might have been, yet the good effects of it are still apparent. It is a question of very great importance, and I hope the Government will deal with it in a liberal spirit. No money ever expended in the Colony has been a greater advantage to it than that spent in the importation of improved stock, in the encouragement of the growth of grain of different kinds, and for the importation of seeds of different kinds. It is well known that the grain grown in this Island is as good, if not superior to that grown in any of the neighbouring Colonies. In travelling through one of the neighbouring Colonies last Autumn I observed that one of their principal articles of culture was flax, and it is an article which I would like so see encouraged here. Our soil is well adapted to its growth, and if it were cultivated to any extent a trade would be opened up, it would be puchased by speculators and exported in the raw state. Or, if it were grown in sufficient quantities to justify the enterprise, it is not unlikely that we would have it manufactured in the Island by machinery.

Hon. Mr. BEER: I would just remark that I cheerfully echo the sentiments expressed by his honor who has just sat down. I was very glad to hear that the Government were taking up this question, for we are almost entirely dependent on the agricultural resources of the Colony, and yet there are many persons in possession of farms who do not know how to manage them. When agriculture flourishes the whole community flourishes. Merchants, and all other classes, are dependent, to a great extent, upon agriculture, and it is therefore evident that it is the duty of the Government to pay particular attention to this branch of industry. A model farm, I believe, would be of great advantage, if a suitable person could be got to take charge of it. Stock of the best kind, and more suitable to the Island than those imported, could be raised upon it, and at far less cost. With respect to the cultivation of flax, I believe our soil is adapted to its growth, and I think it might be cultivated to very great advantage. If it were extensively cultivated, we might have manufactories established on the Island, and we require something of that sort to give employment to a large number of our population who have very little to do through our long winters. From one to two thousand of the population of this city have very little to do through the winter, who might be profitably employed in manufactories. We might also have an oil mill and manufacture linseed oil for our own purposes. The seed, after the oil was extracted, would be valuable for feeding stock during the winter. I am pleased to think that the Government are about to initiate something of this kind.

Hon. Mr. GOFF: I am glad that your honors in discusing the paragraph before us, have alluded to the cultivation of flax, for I believe there is nothing that would tend more to the advancement of our interests than the growth and manufacture of that article for our own consumption, and also for exportation. Country people often complain that, though the price of cotton is so very high, yet they do not like to go into the cultivation of flax on account of the trouble of preparing it, for there is great labor in preparing it by hand. As our soil is well adapted for its growth, I believe it might be successfully raised for exportation, for I find that it is worth 7s. 6d. per stone in Ireland in the raw state. I was informed by Judge Peters that he had raised flax as an experiment, that he had it prepared for shipping to the old country as a specimen of what the Island could produce, but unfortunately it never reached its destination, as by some accident it was damaged on board the vessel in which it was shipped, which is so much to be regretted, as I understand that the sample was pronounced by the experienced parties who prepared it to be a superior article. It is necessary to have it prepared by machinery, but if a mill were established for that purpose it would probably remain nearly idle for four or five years, until a sufficient quantity of the article were grown to keep it employed. It would therefore be necessary to encourage some person to establish a mill by a legislative grant or otherwise. I hold in my hand a very valuable paper published in Ireland in 1862, by the North East Agricultural Association, giving a very full explanation of the cultivation and preparation of flax, which any of your honors can peruse. We have no mines or minerals, and your honors know that every species of agricultural and some manufactures should be encouraged to the utmost. It is considered that the flax grown on one acre of land is worth £20 sterling, and that the preparation of it costs £5, leaving a profit of £15. It does not require very rich land. Meadow land will give good flax, and it requires very little attention. The reason why it is not more generally cultivated is the great labour of preparing it by hand. If one mill were established, it would encourage the cultivation of it, and we would soon have them as plenty as carding mills.

Hon. Mr. DINGWELL: I am happy to hear so much about the cultivation of flax. I would like to see it encouraged, for our soil is well adapted to its growth. His honor, the speaker before the last (Mr. Beer), thinks many farmers in the country do not know how to cultivate their farms, but I think reform should commence at home. The farms near the city are overgrown with weeds, and not nearly so well cultivated as those at a greater distance from town. It is evident that the farmers near town do not know how to kill weeds. They want some person among them to show them how to do it. I am glad that the Government has taken up the encouragement of agriculture, and I will support any practicable measure for that purpose.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL: The progress of agriculture, and the importation of improved stock, have always had my support since I had a seat in the Legislature. And though I have met with prejudice, and encountered opposition, and will probably do so again, yet I am not discouraged; for, as was very properly observed by his honor from Georgetown (Mr. McDonald), the benefits resulting from the encouragement given to agriculture and the importation of stock are perceptible in all parts of the Island at the present day. It is true, the old model farm did not succeed according to the expectations of the country; but I believe it was owing, not so much to the mismanagement of the farm as to the impatience of the people. However, I think the little discussion we have had is of as much importance to the Colony as many we have had at greater length upon other subjects; and I trust that what has been said, and the light which has been thrown on the subject, will not be lost upon the people of this Island. I do believe that flax could be cultivated on this Island to a very great extent. I have come to that opinion from what little information I have gathered upon the subject, for I have no knowledge of it myself. I think the time is at hand when persons interested in the prosperity of the Colony will take up the cultivation of that article, and I hope that a liberal grant will be given for the encouragement of agriculture this session. I hope our agricultural societies will be resuscitated and established upon a more popular basis. I am aware that prejudice exists against such societies. Some think that because they have not a society in their own immediate neighborhood, that therefore they derive no benefit from it; but this is an erroneous idea. Every society must have a local centre; and though those in the immediate vicinity of it will participate more largely in its benefits, yet those who are more remote will also derive some advantage from it. It is impossible to remove such objections. Schoolhouses, and shops of all kinds, are liable to the same objections. I trust, however, that those prejudices will be overcome. I can recollect the time when people thought it was no use to try to raise turnips in this country, saying that they would not grow, or that the flies would eat them all up; but experience has shown that they can be raised as cheaply here as in any country in the world. The turnip crop has been a vast advantage to our farmers here in assisting to support their stock through the long winters; and I feel assured that its extensive cultivation is owing, in a great measure, to the knowledge promulgated, and the encouragement given to it by the agricultural societies. I therefore think it behoves every person who desires the prosperity of the country to support and encourage this particular branch of our industry. Our agricultural resources are all we will have to look to in a few years. Shipbuilding cannot endure long, as the materials will soon be exhausted. When our population is increased to a much greater extent, the attention of our people may be turned to the fisheries, and they will want plenty of supplies, which will cause a demand for the produce of the soil. It is therefore incumbent upon us to throw aside our prejudices, and give liberal support and encouragement to our agriculturists; and I think we confer a benefit upon the illiberal and narrow-minded man when we take a little of his means and expend it for that purpose.

Hon. Mr. BEER: The model farm was broken up just at the time when it was likely to be a benefit to the Colony. There was a large number of young cattle on the farm, and they were sold at a great sacrifice. If any enterprise of the kind is undertaken again, I hope people will have more patience.

Hon. Mr. LORD: I am glad to hear that we are likely to have a model farm again; but who broke up the old model farm? It was established by the Liberal Government, and was in a thriving condition when it was broken up through the opposition of a few individuals when that Government was going down. Those individuals would almost raise heaven and earth at that time to get the Liberal Government broken up. I was very sorry that that farm was broken up. It was almost paying at the time. There was a number of excellent young stock upon it. The first stock that were purchased were of inferior breeds, so the enterprise became unpopular, and a few individuals got up a hue and cry against it. The consequence was that it was broken up, which was a great loss to the Colony. If it were in operation now, we would not have to pay £1000 for three or four horses. Far better horses, and more suitable to the wants of the country, could have been raised on that farm. I would pay £25 or £30 out of my own pocket to establish such a model farm again.

Hon. Mr. DINGWELL: The cause of that farm failing was, in my opinion, that it was established too much on political principles. It was made too much a party question; and if another were established on the same principle, it would meet with a similar fate. The Government will always be subject to change, and an enterprise of that kind should be kept as free as possible from political influence.

Hon. the PRESIDENT: I do not think it was established upon political principles. When the subject was brought before the lower branch of the Legislature, it was generally supported by all parties. I think the real cause of its being broken up was the want of a suitable person, who had a thorough knowledge of such things, to take charge of the farm, and carry out the enterprise. I do not think they gave it a fair trial; but yet I cannot think that it was broken up through political influence.

Hon. Mr. DINGWELL: I understood that the right man was not in the right place on account of his political principles.

Clause agreed to.

House resumed, and chairman reported address agreed to without any amendment.

Ordered, That the same committee who prepared the address be a committee to wait upon His Excellency to ascertain when he will be pleased to receive it.

Resolved, That the address be presented to His Excellency by the whole House.

Adjourned till to-morrow at eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

THURSDAY, March 2, 1865.

The first four paragraphs of the Address having been again read, were agreed to without discussion. When the adoption of the 5th paragraph was moved, Hon. Mr. COLES addressed the Committee to the following effect:—

There is no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that this House will give due attention to the subject of the paragraph which has just been read, and I wish that the Government had done likewise. They have received the Report of the Conference held at Quebec, and, that being the case, they should have met the Legislature with a decided declaration of opinion on the subject of the Union of the Colonies. On a question of such importance—the most momentous that ever was submitted to the consideration of the Legislature of the Island—a question involving the interests of all the North American Colonies—I assert that the Government should have given a decided expression of opinion, and I am sorry that they have not taken the responsibility of declaring their policy; instead of doing so, they have brought the subject before us as being non political. While I admire the man who maintains an opinion of his own, and admit that, in political parties, the several members must often yield their individual views, yet, when a great general principle is involved, as in the present question, the people have the right to know what are the opinions of the Government which they placed in power. When that great supporter of the Conservative party in England, Sir Robert Peel, differed from his colleagues on a great public question, he took his own ground, and was respected by men of all parties for his independent spirit. It may be said that under this scheme of Confederation, the principles of Responsible Government are maintained, but the people will view it with caution, if not satisfied with the terms. One gentleman has published the statement that a majority of the Government is opposed to the Union; but if that be a faithful expression of opinion, their acts are inconsistent with it; no Government takes its opponents into its confidence. In New Brunswick a member of the Executive resigned his seat and office, rather than remain to listen to the plans of a policy he did not agree with. We have a similar case nearer home, and no man of honor will consent to act as a spy. Here we have the Government putting into the situation of their only legal adviser a red hot opponent. I mean to convey no imputation on that gentleman: but I blame the Government for professing one set of opinions and appointing to so important an office a gentleman who entertains views entirely opposite. The Government are playing fast and loose, and are not agreed among themselves on this great question. The other day the leader had several teams employed in removing a building which they did by pulling together, but had he set them to work in opposite directions he would have failed in his object. This is like the position of the Government, and this is what I disapprove of. If the members of Government are not a party entertaining the same political views, in what position are we placed? If the majority of the Council are opposed to this measure, they have to trust to their opponents in the House, the Col. Secretary and the Solicitor General, if the latter be reelected, to carry out their views. I, for one, have no confidence in the non-departmental system, and these gentlemen are the only officials here. Last year the Government treated this subject very cautiously, the then Leader asserting that the duty of the delegates was but to report the proceedings of the Convention. I myself said that the Union would be no benefit to the people of the Island, and voted against the delegation. But the question now comes up in a new shape. We have a new constitution signed and approved of by members of the Government, and our position would have been very different if we had for consideration merely the report of what had been done. The present position of the Government is such that it is our duty as representatives of the people, to express our opinion on their conduct. The fact that they have an Attorney General who is not a member of the executive, and the recent appointment to that body of two gentlemen of opposite sentiments, require that the expression of our opinions should accompany the paragraph before the Committee, before it goes forth to the public. We have had so many changes in the Government of late, that it is hard to say whether it is now a new Government, or merely the old one with a new head. Were it based on constitutional principles, it would have been reconstructed, every member going back to his constituents. It would have been better if the Government had waited for the opinion of the Legislature, before filling up the vacancies as they have done. So much has appeared through the press on the subject of Confederation, that I shall not occupy the time of the Committee by harping on it. I will put my opinions on record by moving a resolution which embodies my views on the policy of forming a Government, some members of which sanction one line of policy, and others the reverse. Whoever may be in power, it is but right that they should shew their colors. I now move the following amendment:—

Hon. Mr. POPE.—The hon. leader of the Opposition, Mr. Chairman, must be very eager to show his hostility to the Government when he would propose such an amendment to the Address as that which he has just submitted. It has nothing to do with the real subject before the Committee; the paragraph under consideration does not express any opinion either in favor or against a union of the Colonies. He seems to be in great haste to declare his opposition to the proposed Confederation, but if he would go and read his own speech delivered at Ottawa on the question it ought to bring the blush of shame to his face. He has moved a vote of want of confidence in the Government, and assigns as his reason for this procedure that he has heard certain members of the Executive state that they were in favor of Union. When the Despatches and other papers on the subject are laid before the House, and the question comes up in due form, it will be fully dealt with. If the hon. member, however, wishes an assurance as to the course the Government will pursue, I can tell him that we have no intention to force this matter upon the House or people—that the Government is not in favor of the scheme, and therefore it was not submitted as a Government measure. When it comes up properly they will not hesitate to give an expression of opinion on the subject. The hon. leader of the Opposition may suppose that some of the supporters of the Government will not approve of the appointment of one who advocates Union to a seat in the Executive; but I can assure hon. members that there is no disposition on the part of the Government to take advantage of the country on the question. No decisive action in favor of Union will be taken until the opinion of the people is obtained at the polls.

Hon. Mr. HENSLEY.—This subject of a Union of the Colonies being one of the most momentous which has ever come up for consideration before this House, it does strike me as very irregular that it has not been made a Government question. They should, in view of the great interests which it involves, have come down with a decided policy, instead of a negative one as they have done. It is impossible to ascertain from the views of members of the Government expressed outside of this House, or from the Address before us, what course they intend to pursue. I have some objection to the resolution proposed by my friend the hon. leader of the Opposition; I consider it too personal. I have nothing against the gentleman alluded to in that resolution on personal grounds; on the contrary I have a very high respect for him. If persons are going to be particularly objected to for their views, I hold that the hon. member has almost as good a reason for opposing the Government because the Hon. Colonial Secretary, who is also an advocate of Union, is allowed to retain his seat at the Executive board. Before the discussion is over I may submit a resolution, with no personal allusions, to test the Government on the general question of the proposed Union of the Colonies.

Hon. Mr. COLES.—I have no personal objections to the gentleman who was the hon. member for Georgetown. I merely referred to him because having declared himself so decidedly in favor of Union, his appointment might seem to indicate that the Government were disposed to support the scheme.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—It would have been rather a strange proceeding to have inserted in the address anything decided on the subject of Union. There is a great difference of opinion on the question, and it would certainly be premature to pronounce upon it until all the papers containing information on the subject are laid before the House. I, for one, am rather in favor of a Union of the Colonies; but I am opposed to the terms contained in the Report of the Quebec Conference. We ought to contribute towards our defence, and therefore I would not object to the expense of the proposed Union on this ground; but it would be unfair to burden us with the cost of constructing railways and making canals in Canada, from which we would derive little or no benefit. When the Despatches on the subject, however, come down will be the proper time to discuss the merits of the question. I cannot agree with the hon. leader of the Opposition that we should have appealed to the people if we could not construct a Government unanimously opposed to the Union scheme.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH.—Before we come to a decision on the Union question, we should possess full information on the subject, and from whom can we obtain the information more satisfactorily than from the Delegates themselves who attended the Conference? These hon. gentlemen, however, at this stage of our proceedings, are not in a position to consistently enter into explanations on the subject of their deliberations. We therefore should wait and not come to a vote on this question until the Report of the Delegates on, and the correspondence relative thereto, are laid before us. The hon. leader of the Opposition seems to be desirous of amusing himself, or perhaps feeling the pulse of his own party, by his experimental and rather singular motion; for it is evident that he has not consulted his party. One of his supporters, the hon. and learned member for East Point, is dissatisfied with the resolution which he has proposed, and intends, it appears, to submit one himself, expressive of his own views. The hon. leader of the Opposition censures the Government because they have not defined their policy and assumed the responsibility of dictating to the people on this grave and momentous subject, which affects alike the interests and well being of all classes, races, and political parties in this Colony. It would, in my judgment, be premature for the Government of this Island at this early stage of our proceedings, and before the other Provinces had given their voice on the subject, to anticipate the action and decision of those Provinces, and to declare their opinion on the proposed scheme of Confederation. In Nova Scotia, where every member of the Government is in favor of the measure, they have not made it a Government question. If this was deemed a prudent course in Nova Scotia, certainly it would have been impolitic for the Government of a small Colony like this to have taken a more decided step. Our proper course is to make the matter an open question, and thereby allow all parties the opportunity of discussing the subject freely, and of recording their opinions upon it according to their unbiassed judgment. I, for one, am determined to do no act to prejudice the constitutional right of the people to decide on this great question, as I conceive it to be our duty to return to the people intact the rights and the constitution with which we were entrusted, and which we were bound to uphold when we were elected to this House. This is my view of the subject, and it has also been ably and well laid down by the hon. leader of the Government, that the people ought to be consulted before a decision should be give in favor of the Union scheme. We have now, however, as a House, no data to work upon, and therefore I repeat that it would be premature at present to enter upon a discussion of the subject, or come to any resolution bearing upon it.

Hon. Mr. COLES.—This is the very point at which I am aiming, namely, to draw out an expression of opinion from the Government. Should a dissolution of the House take place, how are the people to know what is submitted to them, unless the Government say yea or nay. If I only knew their policy perhaps I would give them my support. It is evading the question to say that we are not informed on the subject, for almost every child between Ottawa and Charlottetown knows all about it—even to nice calculations on the cost of the Intercolonial Railway. The hon. member who last spoke, has, I understand, declared his views on the Union scheme at a public meeting; and after expressing himself as decidedly opposed to it, I am astonished that he, as a member of the Government, should give his sanction to the appointment of a gentleman to be one of his colleagues, who has announced himself to be a "red-hot Unionist." I contend that it was the duty of the Government to declare their principles, and then appeal to the people at once, and not to wait until the House was in Session some time before they agreed upon their policy—then perhaps only to put off the question. In Canada they deemed the matter of such importance as to grapple with it at the very opening of the Session. If we should delay giving a decision upon the question here until the House dies out, it will not be treating the Canadians fairly, who are desirous to have the measure carried immediately into effect. It was the duty of the Government, instead of acting as they have done, to have aimed at leading public opinion, and then taken the case to the polls. It is a very easy course for a Government to pursue, merely to slip along without advancing their views on questions of the greatests importance to the country. There is another subject occupying a share of public attention—a Union of a different description to that under consideration, which has been passed over in silence in His Excellency's speech. I allude to the Tenant Union, and I am partly disposed to censure the Government for not declaring their sentiments in reference to this organization, as its principles may have to be tested at the next general election. But I will not enter into that subject now. The Government of New Brunswick have taken decided action on the question of Union; Hon. Mr. Tilley has declared himself in its favor and appealed to the people. If Confederation be rejected in that Province at the polls, will he retain office? No, Mr. Chairman, I believe he has too much principle to attempt anything so unconstitutional. Allusion has also been made to Nova Scotia; but from what I know of the gentleman who is leader of the Government there, I think it is not at all probable that he will shirk the question. It will come up in the Legislature, and if he is unable to carry it, I believe he will appeal to the people. Several members of the Government of this Island have expressed sentiments at public meetings adverse to the proposed Union, but as the Hon. Col. Secretary and the Hon. Solicitor General are in favor of the measure, I suppose their colleagues have refrained from expressing an opinion in the Address, lest these gentlemen should be offended. But they are not so careful about wounding the feelings of some of their friends. The Hon. Attorney General has been wedged out of the Executive Council on a difference connected with this question, and an effort made, at his expense, to smooth down matters for the return of the late leader of the Government to his former position.

Hon. Col. GRAY.—Mr. Chairman, I am of opinion that the conclusion of the hon. member's remarks might have been spared. I would have preferred to have taken no part in this discussion, but when referred to and misrepresented, I cannot be silent. Perhaps the hon member may not be acquainted with the merits of the case to which he has alluded. Let me, then, state that the difference between an hon. gentleman, not a member of this House, and myself, was unconnected with the question of a Union of the Colonies. It was quite a different matter altogether. If the hon. member who has introduced this unpleasant subject would refer to the files of some of the public journals, he would find the reasons which I assigned for resigning my position as president of the Executive Council and as a member thereof. The case had nothing to do with a Union of the Colonies. It might have occurred in any other circumstances. It affected myself personally, and also the interests and honor of the country, apart from the question of Union. The hon. leader of the Opposition has referred to two points, which though at first dissevered, he has since connected—the subject of a Union of the Colonies, and a Government question respecting an appointment to office. I am at a loss to understand how the hon. member for East Point intends to propound his views on the subject; perhaps he will present his objections to the Address in a more connected form. Surely hon. members cannot have so soon forgotten that the Government appointed delegates according to the resolution of this House last session, to confer with other delegates, on the subject of a Union of the Maritime Provinces; and also at a later date, on the invitation of His Lordship the Governor General, that delegates were appointed to consider the broader question of a Union of the whole of the Provinces. This is a matter calculated to affect the interests and welfare of every subject in British America irrespective of party, race or faith; and consequently to divest it as much as possible from a party question, three members of the Goverment, three members of the opposition, and one independent member of this House, were appointed to proceed to Quebec as delegates. This delegation was nominated on precisely the same grounds as the first was appointed. When the request came from Canada for this Colony to send delegates to confer on the question of Union of the whole of the Provinces, surely it was not necessary to call the Legislature together to consider the propriety of acceding to the request. If this were the case of what use would the Executive be? It would, indeed, be a do-nothing Government. There was no occasion to seek new powers from the Legislature; the two delegations were for precisely the same purpose, only the latter was to consider the subject on a grander scale. The one scheme was for uniting Provinces comparatively unimportant; the other was for consolidating the same Provinces into a confederation which would form a state as large as the entire Continent of Europe. If I had thought that this subject was to have been made a Government question, had I so much love, politically speaking, for the hon. leader of the Opposition, or for the hon. gentleman on his right, the member for St. Peter's—as well as another hon. gentleman from the other end of the building who has generally been opposed to my views—that I should have appointed them on this delegation? My friendship for them on political grounds was not so great that I would have urged their appointment had I thought that the subject which the delegation met to consider was to be a question on which an effort would be made to defeat the Government. I encountered no little opposition in procuring the appointment of my political opponents; but, if there be any blame attaching to it, I assume it all. I believe, however, that there is not a member of this House who does not appreciate and approve of the motives which influenced the choice. But Sir, I have recently learned that there are three great commandments for politicians—of which I was entirely ignorant when I entered political life. The first of these is for the politician to take good care of himself and his pocket; the second is to crush his enemy; and the third is to attend to the good of the country. And Sir, I fear that the third is sometimes wholly forgotten in the zeal to carry out the other two. (Applause.) Acting on these rules, therefore, it is fair game for the hon leader of the Opposition to endeavor to trip up the Government on any pretence whatever. I think, however, it would have been more prudent in him to have deferred bringing up this question until it came before the House in due form. The delegates appointed were required to report to the Legislature, which I as their chairman am prepared to do; but at this stage of the proceedings, until this Report can be laid before the House, it is premature to discuss this subject. At Quebec I expressed the opinion that this was a question for the people to decide; when I returned here, however, I found the statement had gone forth—like many more which were untrue—that this question was to be carried without an appeal to the people. I immediately wrote a letter to the different newspapers in the Colony stating some of my views on the subject, and assuring the people that the measure could not be sanctioned without an appeal to them. The hon member has referred to the course pursued by the Government of Nova Scotia on the question. They have adopted there the plan which I thought we ought to follow out in this Colony. I understand it is the intention of the Government of Nova Scotia to submit the Report of the delegates to the House of Assembly, and if a majority of that body were in favor of the scheme, that then there would be an appeal to the people. I have not consulted with the members of our Government —nor could it be expected that I should—as to what course they purpose to adopt; but I consider that it is their duty to submit the Report to the House, and then will be the time for this honorable body to deal with them on their merits. The question has assumed such grave features of late on account of the action of the Home Government, that it may be necessary to deal with it in a practical manner. It is difficult to say what despatches from the Secretary of State for the Colonies may be laid before us in the course of a month. There are some hon members here, doubtless, of far greater political sagacity than I can pretend to, who will probably enlighten this House on the best course to pursue in the case. There may be facts connected with it submitted to our notice of which we are at present uninformed; so it is impossible to determine what steps it may be imperative on us to take. If I mistake not His Excellency stated in his speech that the papers on the subject will be laid before the House. It will be time enough then to judge of the matter. As chairman of the delegation I had my own share of the work to perform, and I do not desire to be called upon to enter into explanations until the question is brought up in its proper shape. With reference to the appointment to which the hon leader of the Opposition objects, I will refrain from making any observations at present, for it would perhaps necessitate a reference to another gentleman to whom I do not now wish to allude. I dare say the Government were actuated by the best possible motives in making the selection which they did. It is no easy matter, as I can testify from my experience during the last two years, to procure able assistants. I suppose the Government would scarcely have ventured to offer the appointment to the hon member for East Point, with any hope of receiving a favorable reply. (Laughter) I regard the hon gentleman who has been appointed as every way well qualified for the situation he has been called upon to fill. I look upon him, Sir, as the father of this House—but in making this remark, I am not certain that I am doing justice to the hon. member for Cardigan.

Hon. Mr. COLES—Nor to one or two others on this side of the House.

Hon. Col. GRAY—Well, I am right in saying that he has been longer a member than any on the Government side of the House. We are all here, I believe, comparatively young members. (Laughter.) I am safe in saying, however, that the gentleman appointed is one well entitled to the confidence of the country. I am not aware, at least, that the Government could have done better in the selection.

Hon. Mr. COLES—I did not censure the Government for appointing delegates, but for saying that they are opposed to Confederation, and at the same time appointing a Unionist to a seat in the Executive.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES—It is difficult to tell who is, and who is not a Unionist in this House. The hon. member who last spoke has, I understand, expressed himself in favor of a Union of the Colonies. At Ottawa he certainly made a speech approving of the terms of the Quebec Conference. As this is a question on which the people have not made up their minds, I do not see how the Government could be expected to lay down any definite policy on the matter. The hon. member for Belfast has set the case very fairly before the Committee, by stating that the time to discuss the question is when the Report of the delegates and the papers connected therewith have been presented to the House.

Hon. Mr. COLES—I cannot allow the statement of the hon. member for Charlottetown to pass uncontradicted. I defy him or any