

adequate provision in the charters for the endorsement of this liability, but at all events that was the principle that there should be double liability. There was a provision also that they should hold in their vaults a certain amount of specie and Government securities in proportion to their circulation, and a general provision that the total liabilities shall not exceed three times the amount of their capital. On these points, in the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Bank charters, there was a very considerable diversity of provision. In New Brunswick in some of the charters it was provided that the total liabilities should not exceed twice the amount of their capital. In some there was not the double liability clause; in none was there the requirement of a certain amount of specie and Government securities against circulation. In most of the Nova Scotia charters there was the provision that the total liabilities should not exceed three times the amount of the capital; but as regarded the shareholders, the liability was not absolute as in Canada, but only for consequences of maladministration, and there was an absence of the requirement of a certain amount of specie and Government securities against circulation. In Nova Scotia also the Government notes were issued simply on the credit of the Government without any provision for the holding of securities to cover them as in Canada. It was undesirable that such a diversity should exist for any period longer than was absolutely necessary. There were certain points on which he thought the Committee and the House would be unanimous; first, for both circulation and deposits there should be the fullest measure of security given to the public, and this should be provided according to a uniform system throughout the Provinces. The next, and perhaps not least important system, should be such as would meet the commercial wants of the country. Owing to the peculiar character of the trade of this country, we had a system of expansion and contraction at certain sessions of the year, which perhaps did not exist anywhere else, and perhaps adequate provision should be made to meet that exceptional state of things. He would not prejudge the case, or express an opinion as to the principle on which this should be done. Some thought the whole currency of the country should be in the hands of the Government; others thought it should be on a principle somewhat analagous to that of the national banks in the United States, which issue currency on the security of a certain amount of specie or Government securities. He abstained from

[Mr. Rose (Huntingdon).]

giving an opinion on this point, desiring that the Committee should approach the subject entirely untrammelled. He would say, however, that there was apparently no difference of opinion among bankers as to this, that the amount of reserve, both as regards deposits and as regards circulation. The bankers examined in 1859 and those examined before Mr. McPherson's Committee all agreed as to this. Mr. Rose then stated that the Committee would derive valuable assistance from the labours of the various Committees of the English House of Commons on the subject of banking and commerce. He added that in naming the Committee, which by a rule of the House could not comprise more than 15 members, he had studied to secure the fairest possible representation of all sections and interests. He did not think it would be right that such a Committee should be composed only of men having a decided opinion on one side or the other. The right course was to bring men of opposite views together that they might compare their views and endeavour to arrive at the true policy to be pursued.

Dr. Parker asked whether the question of interest was to be referred to the Committee.

Hon. Mr. Rose—No.

Hon. Mr. Holton said the Finance Minister in moving this Committee had taken what was obviously the proper course. He regretted, however, that it had not been moved earlier in the session. For any practical purpose it might as well now be postponed till next session.

Hon. Mr. Rose said he had prepared some work in advance for the approval of the Committee, and if the Committee approved of the questions to be submitted to the various interests of the country they might be sent out perhaps within a week, and a great mass of information received in the shape of both oral and written evidence before the House rises.

Mr. D. A. McDonald regretted that the Committee had not been moved earlier, but thought a good deal of work might still be done by it this session.

The motion was then carried.

DUTY ON BRITISH COPYRIGHT BOOKS

Hon. Mr. Tilley moved that on Thursday the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider a resolution declaring it