

Blair, that office had not been filled up. He did not think it desirable that the office should be abolished; but as the number necessary for the Cabinet, and the distribution of its labours was in a great degree experimental—as there was a general feeling, perhaps, that the offices of the country should be administered by a small number of officers, it was not the intention of the Government at present to fill up that office. (Hear, hear.) At the same time, he wished it to be distinctly understood that he did not enter into any engagement that this office should be abolished. For his own belief was that there ought to be a numerous Council, and that, following the example of England, they ought to have in that Council an officer having no special duty to perform; a man who would be always at the disposal of His Excellency for any special duties, or to take part in any matter of importance assigned to him. In England it had always been so. It was considered necessary to the operation of their system that there should be such an officer, or officers; and hence they had the President of the Council—the Lord Privy Seal—Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and several offices of that kind, the duties of which were not so onerous as to compel them to devote their whole attention to their appointments, but left them free to lend their aid on any subjects of great interest; and as an instance of such a subject in Canada he would allude to the acquisition of the great North-West. The necessity of negotiations and steps to be taken in this direction belonged to no one particular department. Fortunately for the Government they had in their Minister of Public Works a gentleman who, though fully employed in his own department, had made this subject his study, was at home in it, and could, without serious obstruction to the performance of his other duties, undertake that also, and do so with credit. The honourable gentleman then read a passage from a work still in MS, to show that men like Sir Charles Wood, Sir James Graham, and Lord John Russell—men all justly celebrated as administrators, were of opinion that it would be a mistake if a Cabinet were wholly composed of those members who had departments of such over-burdening work as to employ all their time. In such a matter his (Sir John's) opinion was that there should be no false economy—that for the sake of saving the salary of two or three Cabinet Ministers, there should be no withholding from the country the full benefit of the system of the General Government. He admitted that to a

great extent their present system was on its trial, and therefore, as he had stated, in relation to the office of President of the Council, the Government would not fill it up, but would see whether the Secretary of State, in addition to his other duties, could also perform it satisfactorily. At present, in commencing their new system, the chief object, it seemed to him, was to have such a large full Cabinet as would secure a proper representation from all parts of the Dominion. By and by, when they were a more homogeneous people, every portion of the country might be satisfied with the representation of the Cabinet—even although sectional interests were not closely regarded. But at present it would be a great mistake to commence by a reduction of the representation in the Cabinet. Take British Columbia for a case in point. When that colony came into the Union, would they be satisfied with their representation if only one man were in the Cabinet from that section. They would not, even although their population or resources entitled them to no greater representation. Setting aside altogether the question of expense, as one of no interest in comparison with the general question, it was, first of all and above all, the duty of every lover of the Union to see that no false economy was exercised; that there should be a full and complete system of administration, which would ensure every portion of the Dominion a fair representation in the Cabinet.

**Mr. Mackenzie** did not understand the honourable gentleman to say that the Government would fill up the office of Mr. Archibald.

**Sir John A. Macdonald**—No; not at present. We intend to try the new arrangement.

**Mr. Mackenzie**—I suppose the trial will probably last till Parliament rises. (Laughter).  
The House rose at six o'clock.

**After recess,**

#### ST. HYACINTHE ELECTION

On motion of **Mr. Jones** the Select Committee on the St. Hyacinthe election were permitted to adjourn till the 16th inst., and the House adjourned for five minutes to enable them to do so.

#### NIAGARA GAS CO.

**Mr. Street** introduced a Bill to enable the Niagara Falls Gas Co. to light the Town of