

May 6, 1872

As to the action of the Canadian Government, all they could do was to present their claims to England, this they had done, and England at first determined to press it, but she afterwards took on herself the responsibility of withdrawing it. This had been admitted by both Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, and as a matter of course in assuming the responsibility of withdrawing the claims of Canada, they assumed the payment of any indemnity which Canada had the right to expect from the United States.

It must also be borne in mind that England had incurred equal expense with Canada in the matter, and, therefore, if she had pressed the claim of Canada, she must have pressed her own also, and, therefore, when England forbore to press her own claim and further resumed the responsibility of withdrawing that of Canada, what further could the Canadian Government do in the matter? He thought the Imperial guarantee should be well considered and weighed by the House for Canada required that her great public works should be known throughout the world, and this guarantee was the best evidence that could possibly be adduced to prove to the United States and to the world that England intended to continue her connection with and her protection of the Dominion.

No doubt the English Government might have carried a direct vote of money to pay Canada's claim, for there were doubtless many who would have seen such as evidence of England's intention to stand by Canada, but was not the arrangement now proposed the best? The guarantee had reference to the Fenian claim only and, was not, as the hon. mover had desired to show, conditional on the acceptance of the whole Treaty.

Under the circumstances, and considering the terms of the resolution, he hoped the House would agree with him that it was utterly irrelevant.

Hon. Mr. McDougall (Lanark North) said although to a very great extent he agreed with the sentiments of the hon. mover, he could not but consider the resolutions irrelevant as the House could not affirm them in the shape presented and then (as appeared to be the intention) the Treaty with all its dependent arrangements. The hon. gentleman seemed to propose want of confidence in the Imperial Government. While at the same time he did not seem to complain very much of the Canadian Government for he admitted they stood up for the rights of Canada, and had urged their view with vigor and well on the Imperial Government. Well, this was not successful. The Imperial Government did not consider that in view of all the circumstances connected with the Alabama difficulty it was expedient to urge a claim for compensation for the Fenian raids.

They decided deliberately and it must be assumed that they acted honestly and with a true sense of their responsibility as

acting on behalf of the Empire. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Cartwright) seemed to think otherwise, however, and proposed to censure them, but in the absence of all the facts and considerations present to the mind of the Imperial Government and the Commissioner, he (Hon. Mr. McDougall) did not feel disposed to pronounce, as a member of that House, in such a positive form as that involved in the resolutions, and he could not but think them inexpedient and impolitic, and that there was nothing to be gained by affirming them. He considered they might suit the hustings or might be properly discussed in the press, but that that House was rather to pass laws and affirm practical propositions.

Expressing regret and humiliation was all very well as rhetoric, but what was to follow—was the English Cabinet to resign? (*Laughter and cheers.*)

The second resolution he thought was contradictory. It first expressed regret that England should indemnify Canada for losses sustained at the hands of the citizens of a Foreign State and added as a reason, that the raids resulted from feelings of hostility to England and not to Canada. To him this seemed really a reason why England should pay.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT said the resolutions censured the course of action taken by the Government for the reason that it was a direct incentive to renewed outrages.

Hon. Mr. McDougall (Lanark North) said that that was one of the reasons, but the reason given for the middle proposition destroyed that for the first.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT said the reasons were threefold,—first, that the action was impolitic in itself; second, that it was humiliating to the English people; and third, that it was an incentive to renewed outrages.

Hon. Mr. McDougall (Lanark North) could not admit that the conclusions were deducible from the reasons. He did not think that the English Government or people were indifferent to the fact that the international obligations of the United States to Canada, had not been observed with the strictness that Canada had a right to expect. The tone of the English press and the speeches in Parliament would not warrant such a conclusion, and he must say it would be impolitic and ungracious to affirm such a resolution. There seemed to be some confusion on the subject of the Fenian losses.

He believed there was a new ground for the objection raised by the American Commissioners, that the matter was not included in the order of reference—but assuming that it might have been included, had the Americans asserted it, it must be admitted that the losses were entirely inferential, and were