

ing, in favour of the annexation of Canada to the United States. My hon. friend, if he will allow me just one minute, may have in his mind a speech which I delivered in 1893 at Parc Sohmer, in Montreal.

An hon. MEMBER. Yes.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I will explain the incident. In 1893 the St. Jean Baptiste Society of Montreal had organized a public meeting in order to promote the erection of a building called the Monument National, and a public debate was arranged for by the then president of the St. Jean Baptiste Society, the late Mr. J. X. Perreault. This debate was purely academic.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. LEMIEUX. Yes. Four speakers were selected to discuss the following questions: Statu quo, independence, imperial federation and annexation. I was allotted the privilege—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. LEMIEUX—of discussing the question of the independence of Canada.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. LEMIEUX. My late friend, Mr. Archibald McGoun, King's Counsel, was given charge of the imperial federation question; my late friend, Mr. Cardinal, King's Counsel, of Montreal, was assigned to the discussion of the question of statu quo; the question of annexation was taken up by a good Ontario King's counsel, Mr. Elgin Myers. The public was given—

Mr. MIDDLEBRO. May I ask a question?

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. LEMIEUX. The public was given a chance to vote on the four questions.

Mr. CURRIE (Simcoe). Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. SPEAKER. The minister (Mr. Lemieux) is speaking with the permission of the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk).

Mr. CURRIE (Simcoe). I do not—

Mr. LEMIEUX. I am making a statement.

Mr. CURRIE (Simcoe). Mr. Speaker, it is customary in this House, when a member rises in his place and interrupts a speaker, to ask a question, and not to make a speech. Therefore, I claim that the hon. Postmaster General is entirely out of order.

Mr. LEMIEUX.

Mr. SPEAKER. The hon. member for Jacques Cartier has the floor. He has consented to allow the minister to give an explanation, but the hon. member for Jacques Cartier can resume the debate whenever he wishes.

Mr. LEMIEUX. The public was given a chance to vote—

Mr. CURRIE (Simcoe). Order.

Mr. LEMIEUX—and in connection therewith a certain sum of money was subscribed. I may say that the question of the independence of Canada triumphed that evening. It was a purely academic debate and I would not be afraid, when the occasion arises in this House, to quote my speech from beginning to end. It has been fully reported in the Toronto 'Mail and Empire' and in the press of the country, but as regards annexation, I have always been opposed to it.

Mr. MONK. There is no doubt we are often misjudged in public life, but if I were to pursue this examination of conscience with my hon. friends I am afraid I would take up more of the time of the House than I deem it necessary to. I would have liked had he been present to say something about our friend the Nihilist; the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, who at one time earned in our province the cognomen of the Nihilist, because he would concede nothing and claimed everything, and he thought that if we wanted to defend ourselves in this country the home government itself ought to purchase the arms for us, because we could not afford to spend the money.

Mr. TALBOT. How long ago was that?

Mr. MONK. Oh, not so very long ago. Of course I know that to-day his repentance has been complete and we know him now as an admiral. But, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt upon one point; there is in the United States amongst people best disposed towards us, those whom we meet when we go there, a disposition to think we are not in possession of freedom here. I have noticed it time and again, and other gentlemen of this House must also have noticed that there is a disposition to think that we in Canada require something politically better. Probably their minds are filled with the memory of other days and times when colonial relations were not such as they are to-day. Undoubtedly that feeling exists in the neighbouring republic. Would it not be right for us before we proceed any further in this matter to accentuate precisely our position at this moment. I have not studied in diplomatic schools and I do not claim to know exactly how relations must be conducted between free nations, but I suppose they must be likened to a certain extent to the relations