

May 6, 1872

On the other hand the Fenian claims were presented; claims in respect to the open organization, drilling, and arrangements by which the citizens of the United States were enabled to inflict raids and devastation on an unoffending country; claims differing in point of the enormity of the crime from any possible claim that could be imputed to the Imperial Government, as much as light from darkness; and yet although Mr. Secretary Fish had consented to the settlement of all claims standing between an amicable relation to the two nations, the American Commissioners coolly objected that these claims were not included, and the English Government, instead of insisting on their being dealt with, allowed them to remain unconsidered.

He maintained that the British Government must have understood from the first that the claims would be withdrawn. A great deal had been said about indirect damages but the question was not one of money at all. The question was what is the duty of the United States towards the people of this country? An acknowledgment that there had been a failure to discharge those duties was what Canada wanted.

The President of the Privy Council (Hon. Mr. Tupper) urged that the fact of England bringing forward the claim admitted its justness. If this was correct, what must the deliberate abandonment of the claim imply? He believed that the injuries inflicted on Canada were not calculated, and that the assaults on our manhood and honour which had been undergone, the submission to the permission by the United States of these aggressions day after day and year after year, without proper demands for reparation, could not be estimated in money; and further, that the disposal of the claim would render still greater the danger in the future. The claim being withdrawn, the people, desiring to punish England, would now know that their course was clear, and that all they had to do was to damage Canada and England would pay the bill.

They were told by the hon. gentleman that there would be no difficulty now, in that the United States had done their duty on a recent occasion. But they knew by the votes that this had cost one million dollars. He was not one of those who believed that this time anything was to be done by being mealy-mouthed. He believed we should best achieve our object by a little plain speaking, and in that view he agreed with the language urged by the Government with reference to the action of the Imperial Government in the matter; and because he agreed that a plain statement of the feeling of the people was best calculated to serve the interests of all parties, and he endorsed their action, and he therefore moved in amendment to the amendment to leave out all words in the amendment after "thereof" and insert the following:

"This House concurs with the view expressed by the Canadian Government with reference to the subject of the Fenian raids in their minute of Council, dated 1st July, 1870, in the following words:—'The Committee of the Privy Council feel it their duty to express very strongly to your Excellency for the information of Her Majesty's Government that deep sense entertained by the people of the Dominion of all shades of party, that they have not received

from Her Majesty's government that support and protection which, as loyal subjects of Her Majesty they have a right to claim'; their minute of Council dated 28th July, 1872, in the following words—'The principal cause of difference between Canada and the United States has not been removed by the Treaty, but remains a subject for anxiety;' and in the following words—'The fact that this Fenian organization is still in full vigour, and there seems no reason to hope that the United States Government will perform its duty to a friendly neighbour any better in the future than in the past, leads them to entertain a just apprehension that the outstanding subject of difference with the United States is one of all others which is of special importance to the Dominion'; and in the following words:—'The failure of the High Commissioners to deal with it has been one cause of the prevailing dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Washington.' (*Loud cheers from opposition benches.*)

**Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD** said he was not one of those who set up the doctrine that we had not a right to disapprove of the action of the mother country towards us. He claimed as a Canadian statesman, and as a Canadian, the right to criticise the conduct of the Imperial Government towards us; to commend where it met approbation, and to object to it if he found it objectionable. The question now was not whether there were no occasions when it was not open to us to condemn or to disapprove of the conduct of the Government, but whether this was an occasion when we ought to do so. While he said that he was quite ready to express disapprobation of the conduct of the Imperial Government, it scarcely rested in the mouths of hon. gentlemen opposite to do so.

The House would remember the howl that was raised by those gentlemen against his hon. friend beside him (Hon. Mr. Howe) when he said that he did not approve the conduct of Her Majesty's Government; how he was held up to public scorn as being a disloyal man; how the member for Lambton (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) spoke of him as a Canadian minister using such language; and yet we now heard him (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie), going as far as his hon. friend, and still further, and joining with the hon. member for Lennox (Mr. Cartwright) in this censure of Her Majesty's Government.

These gentlemen could be loyal when they thought it would suit the coming elections, and they could be disloyal in expression when it answered their purpose. He made no charge against their personal loyalty; but they should be judged by the society they kept, and if men be found advocating annexation, or that Canada and England should be two and not one, these men would be found ranking with the supporters of the hon. gentleman.

Every man disloyal at heart fell into the ranks of the hon. gentlemen opposite, (*Cheers*) and the reason was that they knew that those gentlemen would play with the subject of loyalty or disloyalty as they thought would best serve party purposes. He must say that, although his hon. friend from Sherbrooke (Hon. Sir A.T. Galt) in his remarks did but little to support the member for Lennox (Mr. Cartwright), yet he was surprised at the course he took in saying that he supported the first resolution.