

ecuted, and that gives another deficit. Now, Sir, the legislation which is promised does not seem to be of a very serious character. There is just one measure in all those that are promised here, which seems to be of some importance. I understand that the Ministry again this year are going to try their hand at an insolvency law. They tried it last year, but they did not succeed. I hope they will succeed this time. I hope so with all my heart, because it seems to me that an insolvency law is a fitting accompaniment to the National Policy. There are so many bankrupts in the country that it is an act of charity to extend to them the benefits of an insolvency law. There is another clause in the Speech, that with regard to the French treaty, which I do not altogether understand. It reads thus :

Satisfactory assurances having been received from Her Majesty's Government respecting the interpretation of certain clauses in the Treaty of Commerce with France, ratifications will be exchanged as soon as the necessary legislation has been passed.

"The necessary legislation has been passed." This is what I do not understand. The treaty has been ratified by this House, the treaty has been ratified by the French Corps Legislatif, and the French Senate. What more legislation is necessary? We all remember, the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar) pointed out last year, the difficulty the Government were sure to meet in their treatment of third powers. I know that difficulty. That may be the one which is referred to, but the language is so vague that it is impossible to perceive what the Government means. I suppose it means that the treaty is not to go into force for another year or so, and in that respect the object of the Government will have been attained. Sir Charles Tupper will have been satisfied, he will have brought the Ministry to their knees. The supporters of the Ministry will be satisfied also, the treaty will not be passed by Parliament, and will not be put in force. As to Newfoundland, I am glad to say that I re-echo very cordially everything that has been said in the Speech from the Throne. The entrance of Newfoundland into the confederation was contemplated from the first as necessary to the completion of the Dominion, and I so regard it. But I must say that it is, perhaps, unfortunate that the negotiations have come at such an inopportune moment. It may be a misfortune, not only for Newfoundland, but for Canada as well, that these negotiations come at a time when Canada can ill afford to undertake any new burdens. I do not offer this remark in any spirit of hostile criticism. I will wait until the negotiations have been completed, and until they are laid before the House, and judge of the scheme upon its merits. But, Sir, there

is one thing to which I would draw the attention of my hon. friends on the other side. There is a difficulty with regard to Newfoundland which it would be well to have removed before the island is taken into confederation. I mean the French shore difficulty. Heaven knows that we have causes enough of difficulty in this country, and here is another which, if the island were taken into confederation, might creep up at any moment and add to the numerous difficulties we have. It would be nothing but fair, I presume—I make it as a friendly suggestion, not at all in a spirit of carping criticism—it would be nothing but fair, I presume, that the Imperial Parliament, which is responsible for that state of things, should be called upon before the Island is taken into confederation, to settle that question with the French Government; because, so long as this difficulty is pending, we must not close our eyes to the fact that it is impossible at any moment that the whole confederation may be convulsed with one of those explosions of sentiments which unfortunately we have seen too often in this country already. Now, Sir, my hon. friend from Simcoe, and also my hon. friend from Chicoutimi (Mr. Belley) who seconded the Address, dilated at some length with the question which my hon. friend from Simcoe called a question of sentiment, the Manitoba school question. The language of the Speech is, in that respect, very discreet. The elections are over now, and the language is far more discreet and temperate than it was while the elections were taking place. This is what it says :

In conformity with a recent judgment of the Lords of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, to the effect that the dissenting minority of the people of Manitoba have a constitutional right of appeal to the Governor General in Council against certain Acts passed by the legislature of the province of Manitoba in relation to the subject of education. I have heard in Council the appeal, and my decision thereon has been communicated to the legislature of the said province. The papers on the subject will be laid before you.

That is not saying very much. I do not blame the Government for it—perhaps it was better not to say very much about it. A good deal, however, was said by the Minister of Justice, by the Minister of Public Works and by the hon. Secretary of State on this question in the recent elections.

Mr. OUIPET. Not much by you.

Mr. LAURIER. The Order in Council is termed a decision. I do not understand that term exactly. As I read it, and I read it pretty carefully, it can hardly be called a decision; it is simply an invitation to the Government of Manitoba to deal with that question, and to leave them to apply the remedy to the evil which has been created by their own legislation, an invitation I say,