

Provincial Legislature.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
THURSDAY, FEB. 12.

THE WANT OF CONFIDENCE DEBATE.

Mr. Chambers said: The Maine Liquor Bill was defeated by the party action of the Opposition; and the School Bill, which was of infinitely more value than all the party politics of the Province, and from which the spirit of party should be religiously excluded, was defeated by the same baneful influence—not a single Conservative member having offered to assist in carrying that important measure. The true issue before the country, in this debate, had been studiously avoided in Mr. Johnston's opening speech. It was a question whether one class and one denomination in the Province should, with impunity, commit outrages for which persons of other creeds and countries would be punished. He claimed the right of the Catholics to the same treatment as the Protestant; and because one man had the courage to denounce the outrages on the Railway, he is forthwith proscribed and the Government is to be overthrown. Mr. C. then drew a picture of the organization to trample law and order under foot on the railway track. A young man, a member of a respectable Catholic family living on the line, went up with the authorities last summer, to apprehend the rioters—and how was he treated? The Irish Catholics in that locality threatened to burn down his house, to take his life, denounced him as a traitor to his country,—and all because he had taken his stand on the side of law and order! Were such outrages to be committed, and no man dare to bring the guilty parties to justice?—Will the Protestants of this country look on and see this done? Besides, the Catholics of Halifax, in his opinion, were pressing for more than they were entitled to. Mr. C. instanced the case of Mr. Twining, who had been deprived of his position of Clerk of the Assembly to make way for a young Catholic, who certainly could not claim it on the ground of ability, for the dismissed officer had to be brought back to perform the duties of the table at an additional cost of £200 a year to the Province. Next came the father of the young gentleman referred to, who demanded £200 a year as President of the Legislative Council, and who, because he did not get it, vacated the chair of that body. Then the Speaker became ill, and another Catholic, Mr. McKeagney, claimed it—certainly not on grounds of qualification, for his brains, if he had any, were so near the top of his head, that if they escaped, they would never be missed. The Administration had been asked who dismissed Condon? His reply was, the people of Nova Scotia, and he for one would not have supported the Administration if they had not applied to that officer the same principles which deprived Mr. Geldert and other gentlemen of office. There might be a combination between the Conservatives and the Catholics, but he did not believe it would last, and he would venture to foretell that an administration formed on such a basis would speedily be shattered to pieces.

Hon. Provincial Secretary rose to make his explanations, and said he would give his own views frankly and freely. He would not go into the Foreign Enlistment question—he would merely explain the reasons which induced him to resign the position in the cabinet. He did not wish to affect the position of his late colleague in the slightest degree. If he had done anything wrong his late colleagues had the opportunity of charging him with it—the floor of the house was the proper place for explanation. He would not state what took place between him and the other members of the cabinet in reference to Mr. Condon's dismissal. The reason why he had retired from the Government was, that in June last he saw a letter in the papers from Condon in reference to Crampton meeting. He saw editorials in the *Morning Chronicle* snubbing the government for not dismissing Condon. He asked himself whether, if this man deserved dismissal, the Government did not lay themselves open to these attacks. For his part he never could see the difference between the conduct of Mr. Howe and Mr. Anand, and that of Mr. Condon. Again, when Mr. Howe attacked indiscriminately the whole body of Catholics, he felt that in justice to the large constituency of that religion, who for years had sent him to represent them in Parliament, that he could not remain in a Government which countenanced the acts of Mr. Howe. In reference to Condon's case he would not say whether he should have been dismissed or not, but he was not dismissed until after the meeting of the house. If the government had not the evidence of his guilt in their possession previous to the appear-

ance of the extract from the *New York Citizen*, then they were not to blame. But he did think that if Mr. Howe was a friend of the Government he should have communicated this extract to the Government before he published it in the public press, and openly snubbed the Government for not dismissing Condon.

In future he would be guided by circumstances, he had formed associations with no one, no one had spoken to him, nor he to any one, with regard to the course he intended to pursue. He would endeavor to preserve his independence.

Mr. Morrison commenced his address by referring to the expression in Mr. Johnston's opening speech, that the administration did not enjoy the confidence of this house at the close of the last session, and he proved from the Journals of the House, and the recent avowal of one of Mr. J.'s new allies, Mr. Tobin, that the Government did then possess the confidence of the majority. The leader of the Opposition charged the Government with being timid, but did he not himself exhibit timidity on the Maine Liquor Bill last Session? Who brought it here? The learned member, who set himself up as the leader and the apostle in this great moral reform? No, but he seduced a young member from the Liberal side (Mr. Morrison himself) as the instrument to overturn the administration, upon whose shoulders he hoped to ride into power. The Maine Liquor Bill would probably have passed into Law if the Conservatives had not made it a party question, and therefore he felt warranted in charging Mr. Johnston himself with the destruction of that measure. Mr. M. severely criticised another expression in Mr. J.'s speech, the charge that the government had last Session avowed the doctrine that "to the victors belong the spoils." The charge was made before, and denied over and over again, as well by the administration as by the gentleman who first used the expression as a figure of speech. The learned gentleman had during the same session spoken of a portion of his own constituents as "hungry dogs and wolves," and when reminded of it at a subsequent day, he apologized for his language, his apology was accepted, and he, Mr. M., would not stoop so low as to imitate the example of the Member from Annapolis, and revive it again. If the House was sent to the country he should not be very much afraid to confront Mr. J. in his own county—with his Municipal Incorporation Bill in the right hand, his Resolutions on the Coal Mine question in the left, the Proscription Despatch of Lord Falkland as a feather in his cap, and the last leader of the Halifax Catholic as a breastplate. Mr. M. made several humorous allusions to Dr. Tupper and Mr. Marshall, which convulsed the house with laughter, and concluded with saying that he had commanded a ship for twenty-five years without running on a rock or a shoal, and he had an abiding faith that the ship of state would, notwithstanding the perils that surrounded her, escape from the dangers that threatened on every side.

Mr. McFarlane then addressed the house. At first answering the remarks of the members for London-derry and Newport, and then proceeding to speak fully upon the question under debate, reiterating the charges he brought against the Government at the last session, with regard to the appointment to office in his own county, he justified the course he pursued with regard to the Maine Liquor Law, and concluded by saying that if he stood alone, he would record his vote against the Government. He showed, amongst other things, that out of 63 magistrates in Cumberland, but 13 were Conservatives; and that out of the other offices his party had but one in five or six.

Mr. MacDonald said that no charge had been made against the Government in the important matters of Revenue and Railways, and the course taken by the leader of the Opposition had debarred the House from looking at the public accounts and ascertaining a correct view of the financial operations of the past year. He described the speech of Mr. Johnston as a rebash of the one of last Session, and he congratulated the member for Cumberland, Dr. Tupper, that he had left his long, dolorous and continued whine about the wrongs of Cumberland, with which he bored the House last winter behind him, and that he had found a congenial subject for declamation in the alleged relations of the Government towards the Liberal Press of Halifax, Yarmouth and Pictou. As regarded the latter paper, the hon. member, who was one of its subscribers, had withdrawn his name, probably in consequence of some strictures on his public conduct, but the House would judge how deeply sensitive he was at the "virulent attack" on Mr. McKinnon when he told them that he renewed his subscription the week after that gentleman was so "coarsely assailed." Mr.

McD. charged the same gentleman with caballing last winter to break up the Administration, with the view of forming another on the principle of excluding a particular class—and that is the way the hon. member would carry out the principles of civil and religious liberty. He asked if the house desired a slavish and venal Press—such as Spain and Naples would tolerate—but which he was sure would not be acceptable to the public spirit of this country. The House would judge of his surprise at the conduct of his colleague for the Township of Pictou, Mr. Wilkins, when he told him that within less than seven weeks that gentleman had declared that he would have been the first to denounce the article of December last in the *Catholic*, if Mr. Howe had not taken the matter to hand. He repudiated and abhorred the idea of proscription. How could he entertain it when the Catholic body in his own County almost unanimously supported him. The Protestant Liberals and Catholics rose together—they were united by common ties and sympathies—and any alliance of the latter with the Conservatives would be unholy and unnatural. The Government might be in the condition of a doomed ship, situated between two icebergs, which, starting from different points and propelled by opposite influences, were sure to destroy it, but assuredly would they crush and grind each other to powder.

Dr. Tupper rose to deny the charges of the member who had just taken his seat, to the effect that he had discontinued the *Eastern Chronicle* because of a personal attack upon himself, and had taken it again when an attack was made upon the Hon. Mr. McKinnon. He denied the charge, and with regard to the statement that he had caballed with members of the house to form a government, which would exclude Roman Catholics from all offices,—this charge, he stated, was an unqualified falsehood.

Dr. Tupper then proceeded to answer the speech of the hon. member for Windsor, and said that it was impossible to understand what position he (Mr. Howe) now occupied, for in one breath he calls himself the leader of the Protestant party, and in the next he professes to be the warmest friend of the Roman Catholics. The hon. gentleman then proceeded at some length to take up the arguments of Mr. Howe; and in reference to the suggestion of the Solicitor General that the Revenue Bill should be passed, and sent to the other house, he said that the Legislative Council was at present without a head, and that the government were in such a state of dislocation that they could not appoint a President, nor lay upon the table of the house, in the present financial crisis, a Revenue Bill without increasing the ad valorem duties. A measure like this could not be passed in the heat of an afternoon.

Mr. Chambers rose to explain that what he meant by the office seeking spirit was in relation to the Financial Secretary's office, and that he did not refer to the Roman Catholics.

An altercation here ensued between the hon. member and the member for Digby, Mr. Wade.

After which the house adjourned til 11 o'clock next day.

FRIDAY, FEB. 13.

The debate was resumed by the Hon. Atty. General. He asked if all the officers of the government, some 14 in all, were to be turned out, and for what? For not faithfully collecting and accounting for the public revenue? For not honestly disbursing the revenue, and large sums besides drawn from other sources and expended upon the public works of the country? No such charge had or could be made. But there were personal attacks and insinuations from the members for Cumberland and Guysboro' which no gentleman could utter—no gentleman could bear without disgust. The first was calm, dispassionate, with a polished exterior, but cool and treacherous—the other, shallow and superficial and like the ignoble bird which he had taken under his special charge. The Attorney General denied that the Government had, or could exercise any control over the *H. Chronicle* or its namesake at Pictou. The idea was simply ridiculous. He deplored the attack on his friend Mr. McKinnon; the Government itself had been assailed in the columns of the *Halifax Chronicle*, and yet they were to be held responsible for all that appeared in that paper, besides being taunted with its independent action. He went at large into the rule of Administration in reference to dismissal of officers—defended the Government from the charge of weakness and indecision—traced the history and action of the Administration on Mr. Condon's case—and ridiculed the idea of the Government being responsible for the appointment of an additional Clerk when it was the act of the House. The Education Bill and the Reciprocity Act, the appointments of office during the recess, the action of Government on the Maine Liquor and Municipal Corporation Bills, were, one and all, vindicated and