

with the best course to pursue, but he was nevertheless of the belief that the sentiment of the great majority of the people was in favor of striking off the statute book a law which worked so unequally and so injuriously to the commercial interests of the Dominion. He alluded to the tendency it had to encourage commercial immorality among the community, and to benefit the debtor at the expense of his creditors—a principle not encouraged in any bankrupt system anywhere. He wished to see a check imposed on dishonest bankruptcy, instead of allowing it to be actually fostered by an imperfect law. The country was now in a very prosperous state and could dispense with a law which only stimulated a large class of reckless speculators and dishonest traders. He did not deny that there was a certain condition of things when a bankruptcy law might be necessary; for instance when a monetary crisis arose and persons found themselves suddenly embarrassed and unable to go on with their business; but there was no appearance now of such a contingency, and he thought it was the wisest policy to repeal the law, and take steps to form a new one hereafter in case it should be deemed necessary to do so in the public interests.

Hon. Mr. DICKEY said that he had noticed that the debate had evolved some curious features. Not one gentleman who had spoken in opposition to the Bill had ventured to say one word in favour of the Insolvency Law which the House was asked to repeal. All were in favour of a bankrupt law of some sort, but no one attempted to defend the provisions of the one now in operation. In the facetious speech of his hon. friend from British Columbia, who had rather tried to amuse than convince the House, he had stated that the Bill was promoted and supported by lawyers. He (Mr. Dickey) believed that members of that profession were as fully entitled to hold and express their opinions on the question as the members of any other learned profession. When hon. members discussed a question in the House they did not do so as lawyers simply, though they would naturally give the benefit of their legal and constitutional lore. It could be said with truth at the present moment that all the great interests of the country were represented in the Senate—Banking, Commerce, Agriculture; and after the humorous speech of his hon. friend opposite, he must add Medicine. He might be excused for saying that the Senate was a body, as the debate had fully shown, as fully capable of discussing a measure like the one under consideration

as any other deliberative assembly in any part of the world. It had struck him as a curious anomaly, that whilst the Maritime Provinces had complained that the law had been forced upon them by Ontario and Quebec, those two great provinces were now asking for its repeal, whilst New Brunswick and Nova Scotia supported it. He remembered the time when the law was considered one of the acts of tyranny which his unfortunate Province was obliged to bear as one of the consequences of union. Now, how was he to account for the change of opinion in Ontario and Quebec within three short years. He considered he was warranted in referring to the proceedings in 1869, when every amendment was rejected by large majorities, and deducing the conclusion that the popular objections to the measure must have arisen from its imperfections. (Hear, hear.) It must be admitted that great difficulty had always been found in dealing with the question. It was only necessary to refer to the history of legislation on the subject to see that there is an inherent difficulty connected with legislation on the question. The very number of bills that had been enacted, amended and repealed since its first legislation in England was a proof of the perplexity and embarrassment that met all those who had endeavoured to frame a satisfactory law. The regulations that had been made only served to evade the difficulties instead of grappling with them boldly and plainly. His hon. friend opposite (Hon. Mr. Wilmot) had said with reference to the old law of New Brunswick that so unjust were its provisions that he knew a case of an old man who had remained in jail at St. John for the whole of his life. He was bound to say that there must be some mistake about that matter; the person in question could not have given an honest statement of his affairs. He contended that under the law of New Brunswick, of which he had some professional experience, it was not in the power of any man to keep a debtor in jail when he gave an honest account of his property. They had also an Insolvent law in Nova Scotia under which a man who had been guilty of fraud or dishonesty, might be remanded for a term not exceeding one year; and at the expiration of that period he was entitled to his discharge. They had still the law of imprisonment for debt, but it was a qualified law. The debtor could not be arrested under first process, until it had been shown to the satisfaction of a Judge or Commissioner that he was about to leave the country for the purpose of evad-