

May 1, 1874

The resolutions were then read and concurred *in seriatim*.

Upon section 6, in answer to **Mr. DOMVILLE**, were two kinds of pure iron, of which kinds had a 5 per cent tax, but that the old tariff had been pretty closely followed with regard to that article.

**Mr. PALMER** objected to the levying of a tax on shipbuilding, which he contended was perfectly unnecessary. The Finance Minister had said very justly that the taxes should be fairly raised and distributed over the whole country. That was a principle in which the smaller Provinces were particularly interested, because when they went into Confederation each Province had certain interests and certain revenues of its own district apart from the general federation.

He could prove that the Province which he represented paid much higher taxes in proportion to the rest of the Dominion than any other Province whatever, and he protested against the shipbuilding interest being struck at. The inhabitants of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick paid fifteen and seventeen times more than the inhabitants of Ontario, and he thought the Maritime Provinces, whose marine ranked next to that of England and the United States, should not be so over-taxed in this, their particular interest. He showed the injustice of the tariff as pressing upon the inhabitants of New Brunswick, which he contended would check that industry, especially in the city of St. John, to such an extent as to draw \$95,000 from the Province; and he concluded by saying that it would be better to encourage the trade, instead of discouraging it.

**Hon. Mr. SMITH (Westmorland)** said the hon. gentleman two or three times during his speech protested against this tariff, and more particularly against the duty upon shipping material. He (Hon. Mr. Smith), coming from a country remarkable for its shipbuilding material resources, having himself a considerable interest in the business and having many of his friends engaged in it, wished it to be distinctly understood that he raised his voice in this House in favour of the proposed tariff. He did not desire to shirk any responsibility in the matter, and he could not if he did. He was quite prepared to take all the responsibility attaching to his position as a member of the Government in this matter. (*Hear.*) He was perfectly prepared to go back to his constituents and to his Province, not the "poor little Province" which it was represented to be by the hon. member for St. John (Mr. Palmer) (*Hear, hear*) and take the whole responsibility of the impost.

He deprecated the representation of the Province in the pitiable light which the hon. member had endeavoured to do. He desired that he had found no disposition on the part of the representative of the larger Provinces to do injustice to the small Provinces. On the contrary, he had formerly found them ready to do them simple justice and since becoming a member of the Government he could make the statement with the fullest confidence. He could further tell hon. gentlemen that the moment he ceased to get what he considered just to his own Province, that moment would he cease to be a member of the Government. As yet he had not been asked to take anything less. (*Cheers.*)

He compared the position of the shipbuilders and ship-owners of the Province with the farmers and other classes who consumed large amounts of taxed goods, and showed that if any portion of the

community could afford to pay duties it was the shipping men. Theirs was the richest and most prosperous interest in the country, and he failed to see why the poor man should be taxed and the rich man allowed to go free. He further showed that such duties had been imposed in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick before Confederation, and also the shipping community had to pay a tax in those days for lighting. For the remission of the latter duty he gave his predecessor great credit.

He pointed to the hundreds of thousands of dollars which had been spent on lighthouses since Confederation, and which was still being spent, all for the protection and safety of ships, to a very great extent the ships of the Maritime Provinces, and he warned his hon. friends from the seaboard that they entirely failed in their duty to their constituencies, their Provinces and the Dominion generally if they attempted to set up sectionalism and to harp upon one string as they had been doing.

He expressed himself as highly pleased with the remarks made last night by the hon. member for Charlotte (Mr. Gillmor) of whom he predicted that he would yet hold a high place in the estimation of the House, and whose intimate knowledge of the House and whose intimate knowledge of the subject gave his utterances a considerable amount of weight. During the coming year, \$120,000 would be spent upon lighthouses, a large proportion of which would be spent in the Lower Provinces for the benefit of the shipping interest.

The hon. member for Cumberland (Hon. Mr. Tupper) held that there was no necessity for the increase in taxation, and that there would be no deficit. That was the strangest and most inexplicable contention he (Hon. Mr. Smith) had ever heard. There was nothing more obnoxious to the people than an increase of taxation, and it was not at all likely that the Government would incur the obloquy of increasing it unless the public burdens actually required it. Common sense said "no" when such a question was raised.

His hon. friend, the Minister of Finance (Hon. Mr. Cartwright), had last year predicted that there would be a deficiency, and there could be no question as to the truth of the prophecy. The question then was, if there was a deficiency, how was it to be provided for. The tariff, as modified by his hon. friend, was one which the country would be glad to welcome. Of course, hon. gentlemen opposite would challenge it. As the opponents of the Government, they would oppose anything the Government proposed. But whatever modification the Finance Minister has made, he had made in deference to the opinions, not of the opponents of the Government, but of their friends.

He concluded by asserting that, in his own opinion, the resolutions now before the House would obtain the approbation of the great majority, not only of the members of this House, but of the people of the country generally. (*Loud cheers.*)

**Hon. Mr. MITCHELL**, on his own behalf, repudiated the charge of sectionalism made by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and challenged any man to point to any act of his, during the time he was connected with the administration of the public affairs of this country, which would bear that construction.