

wife about suspicion." I will support the resolution.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—I will take this opportunity of giving my ideas on the important subject before the House. I did not hear the remarks of the hon. Leader of the Government, but I do not agree with what has fallen from several hon. members on the Reciprocity Question. I believe that the Memorial of our Government to the Lieutenant Governor, was perfectly correct, and that no hon. member of this House, or any other person, can put his finger upon one word in it that was wrong, or in any way unconstitutional. There is no doubt in my mind that the Government and House of Assembly have been overruled by the correspondence on the part of the Lieutenant Governor of this Colony, who set his face against our efforts to obtain free-trade, from the very first. I have no doubt that gentleman is sincere in his motives but the people of this country entertain different views from his on the matter, and have a right to speak for themselves. We think that if we had free trade it would be a great gain to us, and no injury to any other party. In the first despatch of the Lieutenant Governor to the Secretary of State, on this matter, he says:

"These Resolutions were brought to my notice in Council, but I did not deem it right to hold out the slightest hope that Her Majesty's Government would sanction any arrangement of this kind, which did not include the other British North American Provinces."

For my part, I cannot see what our Lieutenant Governor had to do with the other Provinces with regard to the matter. In his despatch of the 27th August, he is pretty much of the same opinion. The Colonial Office must think His Excellency's Ministers are very deficient in information in regard to public treaties, for they tell us that the Colonial Government have no power to make such treaties, or to enter into any arrangement with a Foreign Power. Extraordinary information, surely; scarcely a boy is to be found in one of our schools who does not know that our Government have no power to make a treaty with a foreign country. We all know that. This piece of information is all that is contained in the reply of the Colonial Minister. It is well known that our Government never attempted to enter into an arrangement with a Foreign Power. The Administrator of the Government, I believe, highly approves of the steps which have been taken in regard to the matter, and I believe we shall yet enjoy free trade and reap more advantages from it than anybody expects. This is what the Executive Council have asked for, and the memorial shows plainly that they were well aware of their position and never once thought of assuming the right to enter into a treaty with a Foreign power. They ask permission from the Imperial Government to grant to American fishermen the right of fishing on our coasts in return for the

advantages of free trade. The answer to the Administrator is as follows: "You will hear from me shortly in reply to your despatch, and in the meantime I would impress upon you the necessity of observing great caution in touching upon the subject when you frame your speech to the Legislature, as I am of opinion that it would not be prudent for the Government and Legislature of Prince Edward Island to take any action in the matter." This is merely cautionary advice, and tells us that the reply will shortly be received. But, when that reply came, you may observe the decided turn which took place, for the Colonial Minister says: "these proceedings might have been attended with benefit, if they had been restricted, as originally intended, to the mere giving and receiving of information on questions of trade between Prince Edward Island and the United States, &c." Now, we well know that the Government never went farther than the giving and receiving of information to the Committee of Congress. The latter were given distinctly to understand that our government had, beyond the giving of all necessary information, no right to enter into any treaty whatsoever, with them. The answer of the Colonial Minister shows pretty clearly that our Lieut. Governor had given him private information on the matter; for in it we find the following: "I think it unfortunate that the discussion should have been allowed to assume the appearance of a negotiation between a Colonial Government and the representatives of a foreign Legislative body." Again, we find these words: "I am clearly of opinion that your Government exceeded their proper authority in thus treating with the Committee of Congress." But we know very well that our Government did not treat with the Committee of Congress, and the Colonial Minister does not answer the question sent Home by the Administrator of the Government in Council. The information which the Colonial Minister had received, was sent to him by some party who misrepresented the doings of our Government, and who acted in a very unfriendly manner towards it. The Colonial Minister is very particular when he speaks of the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on the matter, for he writes thus: "Her Majesty's Government are not prepared, at the present moment, to take any steps in consequence of the report of the Executive Council. If, however, in the course of time, there should be a possibility of a general arrangement between the United States and the North American Colonies, the suggestions contained in the report will be borne in mind by Her Majesty's Government." I conceive that this reply is as favorable as could be expected under the circumstances, for we could not expect that this great boon would be granted us all at once. When the Congressional Committee came down here, certain parties declared that the visit was all a hoax—a mere political dodge—that as the fishermen of Massachusetts were constituents of Gen. Butler,