

But if Sir Mackenzie Bowell could have settled the question and did not do so, I cannot blame him very much, because so long as the French shore difficulty is not settled, it will always be a serious bar to the entrance of Newfoundland into confederation. I think that Newfoundland ought to be a part of confederation. I am prepared at any time to meet the representatives of Newfoundland in order to facilitate that end. But I would hesitate very much, even if it were in my power to complete the transaction, to do so unless this most irritating question of the French shore were removed from the probability of creating mischief in Canada.

It is a remarkable fact, and it will strike those who have read that speech as a remarkable position for the premier to take, to tell the House that the golden opportunity was lost owing to a little penuriousness on the part of the government of the day, and then, before the sound of his voice had ceased ringing in the ears of his hearers, he turns round and says: 'I could not blame Sir Mackenzie Bowell for not doing that, because this French shore difficulty was unsettled.' It is another evidence of the inconsistency of the hon. gentleman. There is scarcely a question within the last ten or fifteen years on which he has given utterance to an opinion that he has not subsequently, not so rapidly, I admit, as in this case, expressed views of a contrary character. The hon. Secretary of State will remember that when I made the explanation in this House as to the causes of the failure to bring about the entrance of that colony into Canada he approved highly of the position then taken by the government. We had offered them better terms than had been given to British Columbia. We offered them better terms than had been given to Prince Edward Island. We offered them better terms than had been given to Manitoba and the North-west, or any of the other provinces, but after they got that far they demanded we should assume the responsibility of a debt of theirs of some \$5,000,000 in addition. I am speaking now for myself, I was willing to grant all that we offered them, notwithstanding the difficulty that presented itself on the French shore question, providing we could bring them into confederation, and for the reason that I believe that the power and influence of the government of the Dominion would be so much greater, we could bring so much greater pressure to bear upon the British government, that we could bring about a

settlement of the French shore question, which Newfoundland as a small colony could not do. But that was our position at the time. I will go further. I notice that Mr. Bond, now Sir Robert Bond, stated in an interview in Ottawa a short time ago that he believed if Sir John Thompson had been at the head of the government the union would have taken place. It would not be at all flattering to the hon. premier of Newfoundland if he knew the opinion of Sir John Thompson, of the unpatriotic course which he pursued when we met him in Halifax upon a previous occasion. Sir John Thompson, Mr. Chapleau, the then Secretary of State and myself had an interview with the gentleman and some others from Newfoundland upon the trade between the two colonies and the probabilities and feasibility of a union of Newfoundland with Canada, and we found that he had no sympathy with the latter feeling. When he came to Ottawa with the gentlemen who accompanied him I was forewarned. I have never stated this before, but as the prime minister has called attention to it I hesitate not now to make public what probably should have been made public before, I was forewarned from Newfoundland, that he had no sympathy with confederation and that his feelings were against it, and that he only came up for a certain purpose, in order to make political capital in his own colony, and it was with the greatest difficulty possible we could get him to propound any scheme or theory or make any proposition, and after discussing for days and days we found it was utterly impossible to come to any arrangement with him, and I prophesy that just as long as Sir Robert Bond is at the head of affairs in Newfoundland, whether the French shore question is settled or not, you will never have confederation if he can prevent it. It was only last June that the leader of the opposite party, Mr. Morine, was in Montreal, and in an interview gave utterance to the conclusion which we had come to years and years ago. What did he say? He said 'Sir Robert is not credited with being a federationist, either with the Dominion or the empire. In Montreal quite recently the premier of Newfoundland made some remarks which show he still hopes that a fishery agreement by