

shore question, relating as it does to an extent of over 800 miles of the coast of Newfoundland, is a very grave one. The rights of the French, while very small at first, have through encroachments from time to time during the past 100 years, grown until they have acquired—I will not say a prescriptive right—privileges other than those given them by the treaty. Yet we all know how difficult it is to take away privileges which have been enjoyed for any considerable length of time. I have heard it stated informally in another place that the French shore question is likely to be settled. If this is true, and I am sure we all hope that it may be, there can be no real or substantial grounds why Newfoundland should not enter into confederation. It would, no doubt, be in harmony with the views and aspirations of Canadians, and I trust also of the people of Newfoundland, and the feeling would be shared by the mother country, because we all know that it has been the policy of England at all times to favour the federation of the various provinces for the reason that fewer complications are likely to arise under confederation than where the country is subdivided into a number of different colonies. I do not see that there is anything very important in the shape of legislation to be laid before us which would afford a pretext for postponing the meeting of Parliament. The principal measure that is mentioned in the speech is that relating to insolvency and that we all know was pretty well threshed out by the members of this chamber last session, when we spent a couple of months in considering the question.

Having made these few comments on the speech, I now come to a pleasanter task. I cordially join in the observations made by the hon. gentleman who moved the address, in the encomiums uttered with regard to the leader of this chamber, and I take the opportunity of expressing my gratification—since we must have a Conservative leader under present conditions—that the choice has fallen upon him. I tender him my congratulations and the congratulations of those who sympathize with me politically on the recognition of his services which has been extended to him by our sovereign. I hope he may long live to enjoy that recognition, but further than this I cannot go. The hon. the mover of the resolution, with very good taste, (considering the political party

with which he is allied) expressed the hope that the present premier would long retain his position. While we applauded him on several other sentiments we were obliged to remain silent with regard to that one. I have a great regard for this country and I believe its prosperity is being seriously retarded at present by his policy. I know my hon. friend is a protectionist and while I recognize that he is so because he believes firmly that that is best for the country, yet, holding the conviction that a change of fiscal policy would be beneficial, I am afraid I cannot join in the hope so eloquently expressed that he may long continue at the head of the administration. Whatever mandate the electors may give after another election—whether they endorse the policy of the government in the past and so give my hon. friend the leadership for another five years, or whether they reverse the policy of the country which has prevailed for so long, causing my hon. friend to be cast into the cold shades of opposition—I will do him the credit to say that whether as a member of the government or a member of the opposition, I believe him to be actuated by high and conscientious motives and that he will act in all cases in what he believes from his standpoint to be the best interests of the people of Canada.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Permit me first to compliment the hon. gentlemen who have moved and seconded the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I regret my inability to deal with the subjects before the Senate in the same eloquent manner as these gentlemen have done. Before referring more generally to the remarks of hon. gentlemen opposite, I have to thank my hon. friend from Pictou (Primrose) as well as the hon. the leader of the Opposition for the personal remarks which they were pleased to make in reference to myself. No member of this chamber feels the high responsibility devolving upon him more deeply than I do. When I consider for a moment the illustrious gentlemen who have been prime ministers of this country since confederation, I must say that I feel my utter inability to occupy the position and to perform the duties attaching thereto in the manner in which they have been discharged by my predecessors. Those who have given attention to the history of this country and have watched its progress,