

## CONSTITUTION OF THE TREASURY BOARD.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY moved for leave to introduce Bill (No. 104) relating to the constitution of the Treasury Board. He said: I may state to the House that the alterations proposed will make the Treasury Board consist of six members instead of four, one of whom shall be the Secretary of State. A large portion of the business in connection with the examination of candidates for the Civil Service passes through the Department of the Secretary of State, and, therefore, it has been considered desirable to add that Minister to the Treasury Board, and in order that each of the principal Provinces, at least, should be represented on that board, it gives power to the Governor in Council to appoint any member of the Government as the sixth member of that board.

Mr. BLAKE. I am sorry to hear this announcement. As a general rule it has been laid down by a person who had considerable knowledge, I think, of these things, that boards are screens, and the thicker the board the larger the screen, in my opinion. In practice I have regarded the Treasury Board as rather a useful institution, and largely in consequence of the smallness of its numbers. I think that its efficiency and its sense of responsibility will be very much diminished by the proposed enlargement of its numbers, and that the results will be less satisfactory than those results which have hitherto accrued. The hon. gentleman's statement as to the reason for the addition of the Secretary of State is, I suppose, with reference to examinations, and that sort of thing, but the Secretary of State might be made a member of the Treasury Board without enlarging the numbers of the board. Then the hon. gentleman announced that it is necessary to have a representative of each of the Provinces upon the board, and therefore he adds another. It is altogether a new idea. I had thought until this moment that we had already seven Provinces—

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. I said the leading Provinces.

Mr. BLAKE. Well, who is to be the hindmost of those six Provinces, to be left out of the Treasury Board? Which Province is to receive the honor and satisfaction of being out of the Treasury Board? Are there six Provinces represented in the Administration of the day? And if they are not, how is the hon. gentlemen going to get members of six Provinces into the Treasury Board? Obviously, therefore, we have a Bill to alter the present constitution of the Cabinet.

Mr. MITCHELL. They intend to make an alteration in the numbers.

Mr. BLAKE. Ah! it is to allow the hon. gentleman to come in.

Mr. MITCHELL. I am much more likely to get in than you are.

Mr. BLAKE. I believe that, because the hon. gentleman who leads the Government knows the hon. member better than he knows me.

Mr. MITCHELL. And perhaps likes him better, because he appreciates him more.

Mr. BLAKE. He has tried him, and there is where he is.

Mr. MITCHELL. He has not found him wanting as you have been found.

Mr. BLAKE. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to understand this. If it is important that the six leading Provinces should be represented on the Treasury Board therefore we are to have another edition of them. Is it Manitoba or is it Prince Edward Island which is to stand in the rear, because at present neither is represented in the Administration of

Mr. BLAKE.

the day? Is it British Columbia? Which of these Provinces is it that is behind hand? It is too late, I think, at this time-of-day to make this suggestion. We have had great difficulties already in this country in consequence of the false principle upon which the hon. gentleman started out in 1867 with respect to Cabinet representation, laying down the rigid rule that there should be at least two members from each Province. I very well remember when the hon. gentleman defended the number of the Cabinet upon, not merely the reasonable ground that, as a rule, the public feeling of each of the Provinces should be consulted through men who had their special confidence—a very reasonable proposition to lay down—but upon the ground that these Provinces were to be represented by at least two members. That was the principle stated by the hon. gentleman. Since that time it has been found impossible to apply even the first principle, that they should be represented at all, because half of the Provinces are unrepresented in the Cabinet to-day. Still less was it possible to carry out the second principle, that each Province should be represented by two members of the Cabinet, as the hon. gentleman then declared was necessary. There are wheels within the wheels, and it is now claimed to be necessary to increase the representation of the Treasury Board. If that is the principle upon which we are to act, it is obvious that instead of the Union being greater, instead of the confidence of the people of this Dominion in their public men being greater, that confidence is diminishing, and it is becoming more than ever necessary that this wheel within wheel arrangement as to the Treasury Board should have regard to provincial representation, representation to a certain extent so far as the leading Provinces are concerned.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman has rather forgotten my statement in the discussion on the formation of the First Cabinet. The arrangement, I said, was absolutely necessary at the inception of Confederation. We knew there was a considerable amount of apprehension in the different Provinces, especially in the smaller Provinces, in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, that they would be overcome by the weight of the two larger Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. I stated that such was necessary in the first instance, but if the hon. gentleman will look at the "Debates," he will see that I distinctly guarded myself against the idea that this would continue for all time; but at all events, for the time being, I said, it was desirable that every Province should be represented in the Cabinet. I said further, that in the early stage of Confederation it would be well that each Province should have two representatives in the Cabinet; that a single member would feel himself solitary and alone, without any one to act with from his Province against the voices of the other Provinces, it being considered at that time, though it now remains only a memory, that we were comparative strangers to each other, that the interests of the Provinces were not clearly brought together, that the public men of the Provinces did not know what would be the consequence of a certain course of action, and also because, until a very recent date, one or more of the Provinces had declared in the first place against Confederation at all. In order to oil the wheels of the carriage that was going to travel the constitutional road of Union, it was thought well that the smaller Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick should have equal representation with other Provinces in the Cabinet at the inception of Confederation. I am happy to say that the suggestion has been successful. If the hon. gentleman will look back at the "Debates," I think he will find I said, judging by my recollection of what I stated then, that in process of time those sectional feelings would disappear, and while, as in Great Britain, it was always considered that Scotland and Ireland should have