

ted leader of the Anti-unionists in the Irish Parliament, Mr. Flood who declared that "the Speech was that of a puzzled Minister, put in the mouth of an embarrassed sovereign." Believing as the Attorney General did that that Bill was essential to the interests and advancement of the Country, he had but one course consistent with honor, and that was to endeavor to re-construct the Government so as to secure its passage. The functions of a Government are ignored when it fails to command sufficient support to enable it to carry measures that it has declared necessary. But, Sir, what was this Bill that we are taunted with defeating, I will read you the opinion of the hon. members for Windsor addressed to the Halifax '*Catholic*' and I will not stop here to discuss the propriety of such language being applied by a subordinate officer in regard to a measure proposed by the Government.

'An attempt was made, last winter to destroy the Common School system of this country—to sow religious dissention in every district of this Province—to starve poor schoolmasters, already poorly paid—to break up and remove the common platforms upon which Protestants and Catholics had stood in harmony and good fellowship for years. That attempt I would have denounced and resisted, had I have been a member of the Legislature, and if repeated, I will resist it, now that I am a member.'

This language, strong as it is, only reiterated the sentiment of the entire religious press of Nova Scotia. It is true, sir, that the "*Eastern Chronicle*" denounced me for having opposed the school bill, but that was not entitled to much consideration when taken in connection with the fact that it had assailed it in strong terms but a few weeks before. The common schools of this Province do require improvement, but it was not to be accomplished by that bill, and it would have been suicidal to any Government to pass it.

Sir, the hon. Attorney General asks, in tones of triumph, if the Government were to blame about the Municipal Incorporation Bill, seeing it has been uniformly rejected? I answer unhesitatingly yes. On no question did the Attorney General act more unworthy of himself, and what he owed to the country. He admitted that Municipal Incorporations were essential to give self-government to the people, and carry out Responsible Government, and yet he forced upon us an optional clause which we well know would lead to its defeat, irrespective of its merits wherever it was tried. Listen to the language of the hon. Mr. Wier whose views on this subject do him credit. "There is an old vulgar saying—'What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.' I cannot under-

stand how many gentlemen say they are in favor of the bill, but are afraid it cannot be carried out. I asked myself first whether it was a good bill; but, if so, it ought to be made obligatory on the whole people. To pass it in this way is like throwing a fire brand into the country. If Responsible Government is good, it ought to apply to the whole people, and to every county. It is merely giving into the hands of the people the direction of their own affairs. Under the present system you cannot get magistrates to do the work. If the people are not ready for the bill now, when will they be ready? The right way is to give them the bill, and let them educate themselves up to it. The people of Halifax would not at this moment, for any consideration give up their corporation. I am ready to vote for this bill; but I would rather make it compulsory; and in a few years the people would be glad we took the responsibility of passing it.

These words, sir, have proved truly prophetic. Did I not tell the hon. Attorney General that it was worse than a farce to put the bill before the country in this way? That in every county there were hundreds of magistrates and others warmly interested to support it, and the result must be obvious. It is well known that the rejection of the bill was effected by the circulation of the most fallacious and false statements concerning it—statements to which a portion of the Liberal press gave currency, whilst they carefully withheld their advocacy of the bill until after its rejection by the counties.

The people were told that, if adopted, it could not be repealed if they disliked it—that it would involve expense; and a thousand other delusive and unfounded statements. The hon. and learned Attorney General has thus succeeded in effectually destroying a measure which he himself said was essential to our present system of government, as no government could attempt to force upon the country a measure rejected by several constituencies, and he has also introduced a false element into our legislation by interposing the voice of the people between their representatives and their acts, thus relieving us of that responsibility which it is of the highest importance should rest upon us.

We may be told that the government has had new life infused into it by the addition of gentlemen not in it last session and, sir, I will frankly admit that under certain circumstances the adhesion of the present Honable Sol. General might have had that effect. But, sir, if I can shew that that gentleman could only enter the government by sacrificing his deliberately avowed opinions as proved by his speech