

physical world. I do believe in this gradual development of our institutions, but I do not believe in any of those violent and sudden changes which have for their object the creation of something entirely new. I fear this scheme is just of the character to prevent that slow, gradual, healthy development which I would wish to see steadily carried out. If I could be astonished at anything in politics, Mr. SPEAKER, I should be astonished at the attempt which has been made by some honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches to represent the state of the public feeling on this subject as not having that mere sudden, sensational, unreliable character which I have ascribed to it. Long forgotten expressions of individual opinion; clauses said to have formed part of bills not to be found, and not known to have been even drawn; motions threatened but never made, the small party feelings of past times, from before the days of the Canada Trade Act downwards, have been pressed into service to meet the exigencies of a hard case. Well, I shall not follow out that line of argument: it is not worth while. We all know that, from the time of the union of Canada, at all events, until very lately indeed, nothing like serious discussion of the propriety or impropriety of a Federal union, or of any union at all, of the aggregate of these British American Provinces, has ever so little occupied the public mind. I will here go back merely to 1858, when the sixth Parliament was elected, and from that time bring under review, as rapidly as I can, such few points of our political history as are relevant to shew that this is the fact; although, indeed, argument to establish it is scarcely necessary. At the election of 1857-'58, what really were the issues before the country? They can be easily stated. I take the *résumé*, in fact, from the announcements of the *Globe*, the organ of the great popular party of Upper Canada at that time; mentioning not everything, but everything at all material. The great demand of the then Upper Canada Opposition, which gave the key-note to the whole political controversies of the time, was representation according to population, irrespectively of the dividing line between Upper and Lower Canada. That was urged as involving everything. It was urged for the sake of all the rest, and as sure to bring about all the rest, that was demanded by the party. It was to enable them to carry out

their opposition to what were called sectarian grants, their opposition to the holding of land in mortmain for sectarian uses, their opposition to separate schools on a sectarian basis. It was urged for the avowed purpose of obtaining uniform legislation in the future for the two sections of the province, and also what was spoken of as the assimilation of the existing institutions of the two sections of the province, but which was meant to be an assimilation of those of Lower Canada to those of Upper Canada much more than of those of Upper Canada to those of Lower Canada. (Hear, hear.) It was urged with the view of obtaining what was called free-trade, that is, an anti-Lower Canadian commercial policy. It was urged with the view of obtaining the settlement of the North-West; in other words, the relative aggrandizement of Upper Canada. It was urged, also, no doubt, with the view of obtaining what was called administrative reform—the driving from power of a set of men who were alleged, for various reasons, to be unworthy of holding it. But the great questions of measures above alluded to came first; those as to the mere men, second. (Hear, hear.) The grand object was declared to be to obtain an Upper Canadian preponderance of representation on the floor of this House, in order to put an end to everything like sectarian grants, the holding of lands in mortmain and separate schools, to render uniform our legislation, to assimilate our institutions, to carry out an anti-Lower Canadian commercial policy, and to secure the North-West for the aggrandizement of Upper Canada. In this way the question of Upper Canada against Lower Canada was unmistakably raised. What must have been, what could not fail to be, the result of an appeal of that kind? It was easy to foresee that there would be returned in Upper Canada a majority in favor of these demands, and in Lower Canada an overwhelming majority against them. I do not go into this to raise the ghost of past animosities; I am merely showing what cannot be denied—that no one at that time spoke of or cared for this magnificent idea of the union of the provinces, by Confederation or otherwise. (Hear, hear.) The session commenced. Those who had the advantage or disadvantage of sitting in that Parliament that session will remember the tremendous contrast there was between all those debates which had refer-