

of his administration in the conduct of a difficult enterprise, believing it to be of the highest importance that this measure should not be carried as a mere party triumph, but as the expression of a national wish; nor did he suppose that the course he then took could be misunderstood by those in whose interests it was taken.

It is true that Mr. Smith, and on one occasion one other member of the Government, remonstrated against this course, and Mr. Smith observed that it was unnecessary, as he felt that he could carry out his plan without any assistance from his political opponents, an assertion the correctness of which His Excellency at the time felt disposed to question, and which, even if accurate, appeared to him of doubtful policy, as it was desirable the union should be accomplished in virtue of a general agreement as possible among the leading men of every political section in the community; and His Excellency more than once suggested that the principal advocates of Confederation should be called upon to meet Mr. Smith and his colleagues in order that a line of action might be adopted by common consent on a question of such general importance, and with regard to which, now that the Government had adopted the principle of union, it seemed difficult to believe that a common understanding might not be reached.

Upon the distinct understanding, therefore, that the Government would endeavour to procure the passage through the Legislature of resolutions affirmative of the principle of union, and with the impression that an address praying Her Majesty to move the Imperial Parliament to give effect to such resolutions was to be subsequently adopted, His Excellency felt justified in omitting, at the request of his Council, from his speech at the opening of the Session the strong recommendation of union which he would otherwise have felt it his duty to introduce, but the responsibility for which his Ministers felt they could not then assume.

To what extent the other members of the Executive Council agreed with their President, His Excellency cannot say, as except on a few occasions in February, he had little communication with any of them on the subject; but His Excellency is convinced that when Mr. Smith returned to Fredericton on the 5th March, he imagined that he would be able to carry out the pledges he had given, and that he fully intended to do so.

Since the commencement of the Session, however, the course of the Government has shown little indication of a movement in this direction.

His Excellency has never ceased to urge on Mr. Smith, the expediency, and indeed necessity of a bold avowal of his intended policy; nor has he failed to express his apprehensions as to the consequences of delay in doing so, believing that until that avowal was made, Mr. Smith would become daily more and more entangled in contradictory pledges, from which he would find it impossible to extricate himself, and which might act most prejudicially on the prospects of the cause; whilst at any time circumstances might call for such action on the part of His Excellency as would place him in a position of apparent antagonism to his Council and prove productive of very serious embarrassment. This course, however, the Government did not pursue, and it became more and more clearly

apparent to His Excellency that they lacked the power—he will not suppose they lacked the will—to carry out their original intentions. Their hostility to the particular form of union agreed to at Quebec, was distinct and emphatic, whilst their approval of even an abstract union of an indefinite character, became daily more vague and uncertain.

Declarations were publicly made that no proposition for an Union would be made during the present Session, and arguments were reported to be used by members of the Government and their supporters, which were not only against the Quebec Scheme, but equally directed against any plan of whatever description, for a closer Union with Canada.

On more than one occasion His Excellency noticed these facts to Mr. Smith, who replied that the reports received by His Excellency as to the language used were inaccurate; and that it was desirable not to indicate too soon the line he meant to take, as it would give an advantage to his opponents and might estrange some of his friends.

In the desire to avoid giving cause of embarrassment to his Government, and at their request, His Excellency delayed for nineteen days the reception of the Address of the Legislative Council, in reply to the Speech from the Throne; nor was it until it became evident to His Excellency that further delay in this respect would seriously imperil the harmony of the relations between himself and the Legislative Council, and the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, that he fixed a day for its reception.

Mr. Smith frequently expressed a hope that the Lieutenant Governor did not entertain any doubt as to the necessity of his intention in carrying out to the letter the understanding between them, as to the passage of resolutions on the subject of union.

At length the presentation of the Address to the Queen by the Legislative Council brought the question to a decided issue.

Up to that time the Government had given no public sign of an intention to grapple with the question, or to substitute any amended scheme of union for that adopted at Quebec, and the Lieutenant Governor in accordance with his instruction—as the Representative of the Queen—and as an officer of the Imperial Government—could not but feel it his duty to express satisfaction at the avowed approval, by one branch of the Provincial Legislature, of a policy the adoption of which had been recommended by him in his Sovereign's name, and by her command, at the commencement of the Session.

If the Lieutenant Governor's Advisers cannot concur in these sentiments, and decline to become responsible for their utterance by His Excellency, it is no doubt their duty to tender, as they have done, the resignation of the offices held by them.

His Excellency accepts those resignations with regret. His relations with his Advisers during the past year have been harmonious and cordial;—for many among their number he entertains strong feelings of personal esteem; nor can he forget to acknowledge the attention which his views have generally received at their hands, or the readiness with which his wishes have on most occasions been met by them.

But he has no doubt, as to the course which it is his duty to pursue in obedience to his Sovereign's commands, and in the interests of the people of British America.

His Excellency may be in error, but he believes that vast change has already taken place in the opinion held on this subject in New Brunswick. He fully anticipates that the House of Assembly will yet return a response to the communication made to them not less favourable to the principle of Union than that given by the Upper House; and in any event, he relies with confidence on the desire of a great majority of the people of the Province to aid in building up a powerful and prosperous Nation, under the sovereignty of the British Crown. To their verdict His Excellency is ready and willing to appeal.

The Council also express dissatisfaction at His Excellency's personal conduct in regard to his relations with them.

That is a matter of infinitely less importance to the public, and will be very shortly dealt with by His Excellency, although as His Excellency has met at all times with the utmost courtesy and consideration from the Members of his Government, it would be a source of sincere regret to him to believe that he was justly liable to any imputation of such a nature.

That a leading member of the Opposition was more than once communicated with by His Excellency, is perfectly true. This communication was made with Mr. Smith's full knowledge, and in the belief on His Excellency's part, that it would facilitate Mr. Smith's accomplishment of the end in view. The gentleman in question met Mr. Smith at Government House on the 5th of March, and His Excellency believes that a very protracted interview subsequently took place between them; nor was it until a very late period that His Excellency relinquished the hope of seeing a combination effected to smooth the passage of the contemplated Resolutions.

His Excellency thinks it right also to state, that his reply was prepared by himself alone, and that his Council are in error in supposing that its terms were the subject of advice from any member of the Opposition.

His Excellency does not admit the entire accuracy of Mr. Smith's report of his conversations with him, appended to the Minutes of Council, but at the same time readily acknowledges that the difference between his own impression of those conversations and that of Mr. Smith, is only such as might naturally arise under the circumstances. Mr. Smith has, however, omitted to state that at his first interview His Excellency pointed out, as he had frequently done before, the embarrassing results of the non-avowal of his Union policy, and observed that the Legislative Council had now passed an Address, at the adoption of which he should probably feel obliged to express satisfaction.

The Lieutenant Governor of course feels that previous communication between himself and his Advisers as to any step he is about to take, is, when practicable, both desirable and essential, and it was His Excellency's full intention to have afforded the Council ample opportunity for the consideration of his Reply, an intention which he much regrets that accident should have frustrated.