

which is essential to the prosperity of the province. They respectfully submit that they have a right to claim all the support which His Excellency can constitutionally extend to them in the prosecution of this all-important object.

(Hear, hear.) Here, sir, was a Government formed seven years ago for the express purpose of doing that which we are now engaged in—a Government distinctly telling the Governor General that the peace and prosperity of the country were endangered because constitutional remedies were deferred; and yet my honorable friends opposite, who with me were responsible for that document, tell us that we are not now in a fit position to legislate upon this question. (Hear, hear.) But I come next to the famous despatch to the Colonial Minister, signed in 1858 by my honorable friend the Minister of Finance, the Attorney General East, and the Hon. JOHN ROSS. It stated that "very grave difficulties now presented themselves in conducting the Government of Canada"—that "the progress of population has been more rapid in the western section, and claims are now made on behalf of its inhabitants for giving them representation in the Legislature in proportion to their numbers"—that "the result is shown by an agitation fraught with great danger to the peaceful and harmonious working of our constitutional system, and, consequently, detrimental to the progress of the province"—that "this state of things is yearly becoming worse"—and that "the Canadian Government were impressed with the necessity of seeking for such a mode of dealing with those difficulties as may for ever remove them." What must have been the state of public feeling when the Conservative Government of 1858 ventured to use such language as this?—and how can any one pretend that the people do not comprehend this question, when seven years of agitation have passed since that document was penned? (Hear, hear.) But, Mr. SPEAKER, I come to a still more important document—one that goes into the details and the merits of just such a scheme as that before the House. I refer to the manifesto issued, in 1859, by the Lower Canada members of the liberal party in this House. (Hear, hear.) It is very long, and I will only read from it a few extracts:—

Your committee are impressed with the conviction that whether we consider the present needs or the probable future condition of the country, the true, the statesman-like solution is to be sought in the substitution of a purely Federative for the present so-called Legislative Union; the former, it is believed, would enable us to escape

all the evils, and to retain all the advantages, appertaining to the existing union.

The proposition to federalize the Canadian union is not new. On the contrary, it has been frequently mooted in Parliament and in the press during the last few years. It was, no doubt, suggested by the example of the neighboring states, where the admirable adaptation of the Federal system to the government of an extensive territory, inhabited by people of divers origins, creeds, laws and customs, has been amply demonstrated; but shape and consistency were first imparted to it in 1856, when it was formally submitted to Parliament by the Lower Canada Opposition, as offering, in their judgment, the true corrective of the abuses generated under the present system.

By this division of power the General Government would be relieved from those questions of a purely local and sectional character, which, under our present system, have led to much strife and ill-will.

The committee believe that it is clearly demonstrable that the direct cost of maintaining both the federal and local governments need not exceed that of our present system, while its enormous indirect cost would, in consequence of the additional checks on expenditure involved in the new system, and the more direct responsibility of public servants in the province to the people immediately affected by such expenditure, be entirely obviated.

The proposed system could in no way diminish the importance of the colony, or impair its credit, while it presents the advantage of being susceptible, without any disturbance of the Federal economy, of such territorial extension as circumstances may hereafter render desirable.

Now, sir, who were the signers of the address?—on whose special responsibility was this manifesto sent forth to the world? Why, it was signed by my honorable friend opposite, Hon. A. A. DORION—(cheers and laughter)—Hon. T. D. MCGEE, Hon. L. T. DRUMMOND, and Hon. L. A. DESSAULLES, four of the most able and most popular leaders of the Lower Canada liberal party—the party now virulently opposing the resolutions before the Chair. (Hear, hear.) So my honorable friend opposite (Hon. Mr. DORION) not only agitated the country for constitutional changes, but insisted that it should take the shape of a Federal union, because of the cheapness of that system and the facility it afforded for bringing within the federation the other British American Provinces—(cheers and laughter)—and yet, six years after the promulgation of this document, my honorable friend gets up and repudiates a Federal union