

Confederation of the two provinces or by representation according to population, with such checks and guarantees as would secure the religious faith, the laws, the language, and the peculiar institutions of each section of the country from encroachments on the part of the other. The subject came up again in the latter part of 1850, when the Toronto Convention took place. I should, however, first say that, when the BROWN-DORION Administration was formed, the Hon. the President of the Council urged very strongly that representation by population should be taken up as the method by which to settle the constitutional question; while, on the contrary, I saw the difficulty of so taking it up, even with such checks and guarantees as were spoken of, and made the counter-proposition that a Confederation of the two provinces should be formed. Of course as our Administration was so short-lived, the subject was not discussed in all its bearings; but if we could have come to an agreement on one or the other mode, that one would have been submitted as the solution for the evils complained of—it being however distinctly understood that I would not attempt to carry any such measure through without obtaining for it a majority from Lower Canada. I would never have tried to make any change in the Constitution without ascertaining that the people in my own section of the province were in favor of such a change. (Hear.) To return to the Toronto Convention. I was invited to attend it, but though I was unable to do so, certain communications took place, and a meeting of the liberal members of the House from Lower Canada was held, and a document issued, signed by the present Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Mr. McGEER), Hon. Mr. DESSAULLES, Hon. Mr. DRUMMOND, and myself. The document was given to the public for the purpose of setting forth the views which we held as to the settlement of the difficulty. Pretended extracts have been given from that document, as from my speech, to attempt to prove all sorts of things as being my views, but I can show most clearly that the proposition made in it was just that which had been made in 1858, viz, the Confederation of the two provinces, with some joint authority for both. Both at that time, and at the time of the formation of the BROWN-DORION Administration, various suggestions were made as to the carrying out of the plan of confederating the

two Canadas. Some thought that two entirely distinct legislatures should be formed; one local for Lower Canada, another local for Upper Canada, with a general legislature acting for both. Others suggested the idea that the same legislature might fulfil all purposes; that the same body might meet and deliberate on questions of common interest, and that the members for each section might then separate and discuss all matters of a sectional character. Others, again, said the same result might be obtained by having but one legislature, and insisting that no laws affecting either section of the province should be carried, unless with the support of a majority from the section affected by them. These three plans were suggested—the first to have two entirely distinct legislative bodies, one for general purposes, others for local ones; the second, to have one legislature, of which the parts should have the right to act separately for local objects, after general business had been disposed of; the third, to have but one body, but to resolve that no legislative act of a local nature should pass without the consent of a majority of the representatives from that locality. (Hear, hear.) The document to which I have just referred, issued in October, 1859, contained this language on the subject:—

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 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 the press during the last few years. It was no doubt suggested by the example of the neighbouring 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.

The document further went on to say:—

The powers delegated to the General or Federal Government ought to be those only which