

ation, but what do those petitions amount to? The way in which they were covered with signatures is well known. (Hear, hear.) I shall here cite an anecdote relating to the parliamentary history of Upper Canada, at a period shortly before the Union. A member was talking a great deal about petitions in a debate upon a bill. "Petitions!" said his opponent, "I will undertake within a fortnight to present a petition to this House praying that you may be hanged, and which shall be covered with good and valid signatures!" The challenge was accepted, and at the end of three weeks the petition arrived, praying for the hanging of the man who had so much faith in the virtue of petitions! How had it been obtained? By posting at a tavern situated at four cross-roads a skilful and knowing agent, who incessantly said to the frequenters of the tavern—"Do you like good roads?" "Yes." "Well, then, sign this petition." All signed, without reading it. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Exactly in this manner were obtained most of the signatures against Confederation. At Montreal, agents went from tavern to tavern and induced all who were there to sign, or signed for those who resided in the vicinity without even consulting them. (Hear, hear.) Have we not also seen petitions coming from counties in which the Opposition were not even able to find candidates? They may easily obtain signatures of this description, and by this means; but that does not constitute an expression of the opinion of Lower Canada, and those petitions will not carry elections. The hon. member ought to know something about it, he who was in power at the time of the last general election. (Hear, hear.) He endeavored to explain away his contradictions by saying that he had never been in favor of the Confederation of all the provinces. I did not state that he was in favor of this Confederation of all the provinces; I only said that he was willing, as a member of the BROWN-DORION Government, in 1858, to have representation based on population, with checks, guarantees and assurances; that then, in 1859, he proposed as an alternative to that measure, in his Montreal manifesto, Confederation of the two Canadas; and then, in 1860-'61 he was ready to accept any possible change, even Confederation of all British North America. (Hear, hear.) To prove that he was in favor of Confederation of all the provinces, I quoted one of his speeches, in which he said, on the 6th July, 1858:—

The repeal of the union, a Federal union, representation based on population, or some other great change, must of necessity take place, and for my part I am disposed to examine the question of representation based on population, with the view of ascertaining whether it might not be conceded with guarantees for the protection of the religion, the language and the laws of the Lower Canadians. I am likewise prepared to take into consideration the scheme for a Confederation of the provinces, &c., &c.

Then another, of the 3rd May, 1860, of which I gave two versions—the first from the *Mirror of Parliament*, and the second from the *Morning Chronicle*, to which I was referred as being more authentic and more orthodox by the organ of the hon. member for Hochelaga:—

I hope, however, that the day will come in which it will be desirable for Canada to federate with the Lower Provinces, &c.

Those in favor of a Federal union of the provinces must see that this proposed Federation of Upper and Lower Canada is the best means to form a nucleus around which the great Confederation of all the provinces could be formed in the course of time.—*Mirror of Parliament*.

I look upon the Federal union of Upper and Lower Canada as the nucleus of the great Confederation of the Provinces of North America to which all look forward. I believe that time will bring about the union of all the provinces.—*Morning Chronicle*.

Could anything be more explicit?

HON. MR. DORION—The word "he" is not in the report.

HON. MR. CAUCHON—No; and I corrected that error the other night; but I maintained with reason that the words "to which all look forward" meant that all persons directed their attention towards Confederation. Now, if all persons expect Confederation, if all persons direct their attention towards it as towards the promised land, the hon. member for Hochelaga must be included to a small extent in this term "all persons." (Hear, hear.) Did he not, moreover, declare that the Confederation of the two Canadas, which he proposed, was to be but the nucleus of the great Confederation, the necessary nucleus for the Confederation of all the American Provinces, which we are considering at present?

HON. MR. DORION—I did not say the necessary nucleus.

HON. MR. CAUCHON—The hon. member always seeks loop-holes by which to escape from his speeches and to evade the consequences of his past opinions; but as I