

complishment of which His Excellency was directed by every means in his power to promote.

The Lieutenant Governor also endeavored, to the best of his ability, to point out to Mr. Smith the advantages of a real and effective Union of the British American Provinces, and the urgent necessity, under existing circumstances, for effecting such a measure.

His Excellency stated his confident belief, that after being accepted as a basis, it was found that the details of the Scheme agreed to at Quebec were open to just and serious objections on the part of the Maritime Provinces, the representation of their Legislatures to that effect would be certain to receive a respectful attention from Her Majesty's Government, and from that of Canada. His Excellency concluded by handing to Mr. Smith the following Memorandum:—

"CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM.

"The Lieutenant Governor has been instructed by a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, bearing date June 24th, 1865, to express to the Legislature of New Brunswick, on its next re-assembling, 'the strong and deliberate opinion of Her Majesty's Government, that it is an object much to be desired that all the British North American Colonies should agree to unite in one Government.'

The Lieutenant Governor has now fixed the 8th proximo as the day upon which the General Assembly is to meet for despatch of business, and before that period it is highly desirable that he should be informed whether his advisers are prepared to recommend the Legislature to give effect to the opinion thus expressed by Her Majesty's Government.

(Signed) A. GORDON."

Fredericton, February, 1866.

This Memorandum, in compliance with Mr. Smith's urgent request, was not formally transmitted to the Council, but it was carefully read by him, and its substance communicated to his colleagues.

Mr. Smith must have perceived, although His Excellency abstained from any expression calculated to wound the susceptibility of his Council, that had the question propounded by that Memorandum received a negative response His Excellency was prepared to decline to accede to the recommendation that Mr. Wilnot's resignation should be accepted, and to entrust that gentleman the responsibility of attempting to carry into effect the policy on account of his adherence to which he desired to quit the Government which, in conjunction with Mr. Smith, he had undertaken to form.

After several communications with the other members of the Council, Mr. Smith ultimately informed His Excellency that whilst unable to accept in its integrity the Scheme adopted at Quebec, he and his colleagues were not indisposed to meet the wishes of Her Majesty's Government; and that it appeared to him that the requisites for the adoption of such a course might be obtained if the Messrs. transmitting the papers on this subject to the Legislature were referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses, with an understanding that that Committee should report in favor of a measure of Union.

His Excellency replied that he had no objection to such a course, provided

it was clearly understood beforehand that this reference was to be made only with a view of rendering it easier for the Government to adopt a course which they had themselves in any case resolved to pursue, and with no intention to cast upon the Committee the duty of finding a policy for the Government; for that a reference of such a description, besides involving an abdication of their proper functions as a Government, would cause much delay, and might after all terminate in a report unfavorable to union, in which case it was needless to point out to him that so far from any progress having been made in the desired direction, the position of the cause would have been materially injured.

Mr. Smith answered that he could not of course formally pledge beforehand a Committee of the Legislature, but that in making himself responsible for the recommendation, it would be with the view of honestly carrying out the policy so indicated.

The Committee having reported, the next step to be taken appeared to His Excellency to be the introduction by the Government of an Address to the Queen, praying Her Majesty to take steps for the accomplishment of the union, and His Excellency drew out the rough outline of such an Address, similar in substance to that adopted by the Canadian Parliament; but adding a representation that portions of the scheme agreed to at Quebec were received with apprehension and alarm by a large part of the people of this and the adjoining Province, and a prayer that Her Majesty would be pleased, in the preparation of any Imperial Act to effect the desired union, to give just weight to the objections urged against such provisions on their behalf, and would afford the Provincial Legislature an opportunity of considering the scheme agreed upon, before its final adoption. To this proposal His Excellency understood Mr. Smith to assent and his impression to that effect is confirmed by finding it so stated in a note made at the time, and read by His Excellency a few days subsequently to Mr. Smith, and in the Despatch based on these notes, addressed by His Excellency to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Mr. Smith has lately, however, assured His Excellency that he only meant that such an Address might "grow out of the Committee," and did not intend to pledge himself in the first instance to propose it.

A controversy with respect to the words used in conversation, and the meaning intended to be conveyed by them, is seldom capable of satisfactory settlement, and it is not His Excellency's intention to discuss the greater accuracy of Mr. Smith's memory, or his own.

It is sufficient to remark that whatever the precise nature of the course agreed to on the 17th February (for the discussion lasted three days), was, it was one to which it was felt that it would be more difficult to reconcile the friends and supporters of the Government, than its actual members, and Mr. Smith at once left Fredericton in order to prepare his principal adherents for the altered policy he proposed to pursue, asking His Excellency to observe the strictest secrecy on the subject until his return to report either the

acquiescence of his friends, or the failure of his efforts.

Mr. Smith on his return informed His Excellency, on the 3rd of March, that his party generally were willing to assent to the course which he had consented to pursue. It was accordingly agreed to insert in the Speech on the opening of the Session, the recommendation of Confederation made by Her Majesty's Government, and as early as possible to move the appointment of such a joint Committee of both Houses of the Legislature as should ensure the adoption of a Scheme of Union, whilst the objections to the Quebec Scheme were to be carefully weighed and examined at the same time by the Committee.

What the precise alterations in that Scheme were which would have satisfied Mr. Smith His Excellency was never able exactly to learn; but he found that representation according to population, to which he entertained a strong objection, would not be regarded by him as an insuperable obstacle to union, should a larger share of representation be secured to New Brunswick in the Upper Branch of the proposed Federal Legislature.

His Excellency, considering that the speedy accomplishment of a measure of union was now a matter of almost absolute certainty, addressed to Mr. Smith, on the 7th March, an extract of which the following is an illustration:—

"I have been much gratified, though not surprised, to find that you are disposed to approach the question of union, as it now presents itself, in a large and statesmanlike spirit, and to realize as facts the necessities which are imposed by the actual condition of affairs. There is nothing which more distinguishes a statesman from a man incompetent to deal with great affairs, than this power of appreciating the changes, the mode, and the obligation, (often a most irksome one,) of acquiescing in a course which, *per se*, he considers open to objection, in order to prevent evils of yet greater magnitude.

"You have it in your power to render 'the Province the inestimable service' of depriving its accession to the principle of union of that character of a party triumph, which it must otherwise wear, and of those feelings of 'bitterness which such a triumph would engender.'

Mr. Smith did not contradict the presumption on which this letter was founded, and verbally acknowledged the terms in which His Excellency therein spoke of his conduct.

Having thus, therefore, as he presumed, ascertained that his Council were not indisposed in their own way, and at their own time, to recommend to the Legislature the adoption of a union policy, His Excellency felt that much forbearance was required in order that this change of course might be accomplished in the manner which the Council might think least injurious to themselves, and most calculated to ensure the ultimate success of the measure; and with this view he sought to secure the co-operation of some of the leading friends of Confederation ordinarily hostile to the Government.

In doing so it was His Excellency's earnest desire to strengthen the hands