

conviction. Why conceal from us the fruits of so many and such serious meditations? Why, setting aside the facile and convenient task of censor, does he not come forward as the architect of a political edifice capable of sheltering and protecting against tempest from without, our nationality and the institutions of which it is composed. It is because "if criticism is easy, art is difficult." This truth enunciated by a poet, nearly two thousand years ago, evidently belongs to all ages, and it finds, to-day more particularly, its application in the person of the honorable member for Hochelaga. (Hear, hear.) *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*—and behold, the honorable gentleman told us on the 16th February, 1865:—

Representation based upon population was one of the least causes of this project. [And further on]: But, as soon as the Government found itself, after its defeat, obliged either to resign or to appeal to the people, gentlemen on the other side of the House, without there being the slightest agitation on this question, prepared to embrace their most violent adversaries, and said to themselves: "We are going to forget our past differences, provided we can preserve our portfolios."

Had the honorable gentleman, therefore, forgotten that which he stated with so much emphasis and apparently with so much conviction in 1858:—

The honorable member for Brockville, the Postmaster General, the Speaker, and other members representing Lower Canadian counties, in the present Parliament, have already voted for representation by population. Before long, it will become impossible to resist the demand of Upper Canada in this respect. If representation by population be not granted now, it will infallibly obtain it later, but then without any guarantee for the protection of the French Canadians.

Had he changed his opinion in 1859 when he wrote conjointly with Hon. Messrs. DRUMMOND, DESSAULLES and MCGEE:—

It is with the settled conviction that an inevitable constitutional crisis imposed upon the Liberal party of Lower Canada duties proportionate with the gravity of the circumstances in which the affairs of the country were, that your Committee has undertaken the task with which it is charged. It has become evident to all those who, for several years back, have given their attention to daily events; and above all to those who have had to mingle actively with public affairs, that we are rapidly reaching a state of things which will necessitate modifications in the relations existing between Upper and Lower Canada; and a

search for the means most likely to meet the difficulty, when it presents itself, has not failed to be the subject of the most serious consideration and frequent discussion in and out of Parliament.

The proposition for the formation of a Confederation of the two Canadas is not a new one. It has frequently been agitated in Parliament and in the press for several years past. The example of the neighboring states, in which the application of the Federal system has shewn us how fitting it was to the government of an immense territory, inhabited by people of different origins, creeds, laws and customs, has no doubt suggested the idea; but it was only in 1856 that this proposition was enunciated before the Legislature by the Lower Canadian Opposition, as offering, in its opinion, the only effective remedy for the abuses produced by the present system.

Lower Canada wishes to maintain intact the present union of the provinces. If she will not consent to a dissolution nor to Confederation, it is difficult to conceive what plausible reasons she can advance for refusing representation by population. Up to the present time she has opposed it by alleging the danger which might result to some of the institutions which are most dear to her; but this reason would be no longer sustainable if it resisted a proposition the effect of which would be to leave to the inhabitants of Lower Canada the absolute control of those same institutions and to surround them with the most efficient protection which it is possible to imagine—that which would procure for them the formal dispositions of a written constitution, which could not be changed without their consent.

It appears therefore that the only alternative which now offers itself to the inhabitants of Lower Canada is a choice between dissolution pure and simple, or Confederation on one side, and representation by population on the other. And however opposed Lower Canada may be to representation by population, is there not imminent danger that it may be finally imposed upon it, if it resist all measures of reform, the object of which is to leave to the local authorities of each section the control of its own interests and institutions.

We should not forget that the same authority which imposed on us the Act of Union, or which altered it without our consent, by repealing the clause which required the concurrence of two-thirds of the members of both Houses in order to change the representation respecting the two sections, may again intervene to impose upon us this new change.

The customs, postal matters, laws regulating currency, patents, copyrights, public lands, and those public works which are of common interest to all parts of the country, should be the principal if not the only subjects of which the Federal Government would have the control, while all that related to purely local improvements, to edu-