

Thus it was that whenever the struggle for rights was persevered in, the result was success; and why is it, I ask, that our statesmen who have struggled since the union to preserve the Constitution as it is, with such signal success, now give way to the demands of Upper Canada? Let us, then, maintain our present position, the most fruitful in advantages to French-Canadians. The question of finance had been for some time looked upon as disposed of, but on DALHOUSIE's return the question arose again in a more threatening form than ever, and the supplies were refused (1827). The Governor on the following day prorogued Parliament, insulting the dignity of the Commons and eulogizing the Legislative Council. This act of tyranny caused great excitement amongst the people. The press attacked the Government, and in order to show the exasperation of men's minds at the time, I quote an extract from one of the newspapers of that period:—

Canadians, chains are being forged to bind you; it would seem that we are to be annihilated or ruled with a rod of iron. Our liberties are invaded, our rights violated, our privileges abolished, our complaints despised, our political existence menaced with utter and complete ruin. The time has now come to put forth all your resources and to display all your energy, so as to convince the Mother Country and the horde who for half a century have tyrannized over you in your own homes, that if you are subjects you are not slaves.

The elections resulted favorably for the popular party. At the meeting of Parliament, Mr. PAPINEAU was elected Speaker, but the Governor refused to sanction the choice, and told the Legislative Assembly to elect another. What was the proper course for the House of Assembly to pursue in the face of such conduct? To give way? No, Mr. SPEAKER; there were at that time men in our House of Assembly, men who did not shrink from their duty, nor from the responsibility of their just opposition. On motion of Mr. CUVILLIER, it was resolved that the election of the Speaker must be made freely and independently of the Governor; that Mr. PAPINEAU had been so elected; that under the law, no confirmation was needed, the latter being, like the presentation, a simple matter of form and usage. Mr. PAPINEAU having been reinstated in the chair, the Governor refused to approve the selection made, and the same evening Parliament was dissolved. Thus, Mr. SPEAKER, Parliament existed but one day, because the Speaker was a man who valued his independence too highly to sub-

mit to the dictates of an ill-advised government. In truth, if these are the liberties we owe to the colonial system, I need not stop to prove their utter hollowness. The people understood the position in which it was sought to place them, and took steps to repel these fresh attempts at aggression. The question created increased agitation; public meetings were held in city, town and country; the speeches made betokened the disturbed state of the public mind; proceedings were taken against the press, and Mr. WALLER, editor of the *Spectateur*, of Montreal, was arrested for the second time. Addresses, bearing over 80,000 signatures, were forwarded to England in the hands of Messrs. NELSON, CUVILLIER and D. B. VIGER. Mr. GALT took the petition of the partisans of the oligarchy. A great meeting of the inhabitants of the counties of Verchères, Chambly, Rouville and St. Hyacinthe was held at St. Charles; the people protested energetically against the existing state of things, and in fact it was broadly declared that the natural consequences must be expected to follow upon so flagrant a violation of the most sacred rights of the French-Canadians. Mr. SPEAKER, the Canadian people, in the person of their leaders, at that period traversed the ocean in order to obtain justice from the British Government, and laid at the foot of the Throne the protest of 80,000 of our fellow-countrymen, a people who, in the trying days of our history, had not hesitated to sacrifice their lives to maintain British power on this continent; and once more, in this instance, when an attempt is made to force upon us a Constitution we have never asked for and which the people of Lower Canada energetically condemn, the same means of protesting is open to us, and the Government may rely upon it that we shall be as firm in defence of our political rights and liberties as were the representatives of the people in former days. Our protest will be, if anything, still more energetic against the proposed scheme of Confederation which it is sought to impose on us:

The Houses met in 1831, and the Governor, in the course of the session, communicated to Parliament the reply from England relative to the question of the supplies. The Imperial Government gave to the representatives of the people the control of the revenue, with the exception of the casual and territorial items, consisting of the Jesuits' Estates, the King's Posts, the *droit du quint*, the *lods et ventes*, woods and forests, &c., for a civil list of £19,000 voted for the lifetime of the king.

In 1831 power was granted for voting, item by