

the hon. and gallant Knight, or the hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands, had written the paragraph; even they could not offer a better defence. (Hear, hear.) But I wish to call to the next paragraph of this manifesto the attention of my hon. friend (Hon. Mr. ATKINS), who thinks that these resolutions have not been long enough before the public to enable them to form a correct judgment upon them. I trust the House will bear with me while quoting from this State paper; but really I feel that the arguments which it urges are so good that they are the best defence of the resolutions that can be offered:—

The proposition to Federalize the Canadian union is not new. On the contrary, it has been frequently mooted in Parliament and in the press during the last few years. It was, no doubt, suggested by the example of the neighboring 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 consistence 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.

Thus it appears that the gallant Knight and his confrères of the Conference have not the credit of originating this scheme—the honor belongs to the Liberal party of Lower Canada; and it is somewhat surprising that these gentlemen, who not only adopted it themselves but recommended it to Upper Canada, are the only parties who now oppose it. (Hear, hear.) Now, mark the significance of the paragraph which follows:—

The discussion now going on in Upper Canada justifies the hope that the Liberal party of that section of the province will at the approaching convention pronounce in favor of Federation. It, therefore, now becomes imperative upon the Liberals of Lower Canada to determine whether they will sustain the views enunciated in Parliament in 1856, and urged upon every subsequent occasion when constitutional changes were discussed.

HON. MR. CURRIE—Hear, hear!

HON. MR. CHRISTIE—The hon. gentleman says "hear, hear," but what was recommended in this paragraph has been done. Our friends called on the Liberal party in Upper Canada to adopt their scheme at the convention of 1859. It was then adopted. It has now been adopted by both parties in Upper Canada; nay more, it has

been adopted by the Conservative party in Lower Canada, and shall the country now be told that the only party who oppose it, are the Liberal party of Lower Canada, who claim the credit of being its authors. The arguments are so cogent that I must continue to quote them:—

If Lower Canada insists on maintaining the union intact,—if she will neither consent to a dissolution of the union, nor consider the project of a Federation, it is difficult to conceive on what reasonable grounds the demand for representation according to population can be resisted. The plea for such a resistance has hitherto been, that danger might arise to some of her peculiar and most cherished institutions; but that ground will be no longer tenable if she rejects a proposition the effect of which would be to leave to her own people the sole and absolute custody of those institutions, and to surround them by the most stringent of all possible safeguards, the fundamental law of the land, unalterable save by the action of the people affected by them.

Could there be anything stronger or more to the point than this. He will not admit it, but no doubt this document has contributed largely to the conversion of my venerable and gallant friend at the head of the Government. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I have such faith in the efficacy of it, that in the hope of making more converts I will go on with it:—

Your committee will not be expected, it is presumed, to do more than indicate the conclusions at which they have arrived with respect to the more prominent features of the proposed system of Federation. They are clearly of opinion that whatever be the number of the provinces into which it may ultimately be thought advisable to divide the Province of Canada, the old division line between Upper and Lower Canada must be preserved. In the distribution of powers between the Local, or State, and the Federal Government, the controlling and pervading idea should be to delegate to the Federal Government such authority only as would be essential to the objects of the Federation; and by necessary consequence to reserve to the subdivisions, powers as ample and varied as possible. The customs, the post-office, the laws concerning patents and copyrights, the currency, and such of the public works as are of general interest to the whole province, would form the chief, if not the only subjects with which the General Government should be charged; while everything relating to purely local improvements, to education, to the administration of justice, to the militia, to laws relating to property, and generally all questions of local concern; in fine, on all matters not specifically devolving on the Federal Government, would be lodged in the governments of the separate provinces. * * * In conclusion,