

this new system of ours a warm, unhesitating, thorough support. [Loud cheers.] He should show that he is determined to carry it through in the best way it can be—not with a preconceived idea of working it more into the shape of a Legislative union, nor yet with any preconceived idea of working it into anything more of a Federative system. Take it as it is. Conceal none of its difficulties. We are bound to look at them all. Let us face them boldly and at once; but let us look at them fairly, and with a determination that, if it be possible, every difficulty shall be overcome. We are not scheming to bring about any changes of our system; but are sincerely desirous of working it in the best way we can, careless in what direction it may tend, whether more towards a Federative or a Legislative system—probably I should be more correct in saying, wishing it may change neither one way nor the other, but may last essentially as it is, with no strong tendency to change in any way whatever; because that is the best state of a nation's existence in which the bulk of the people are content and happy, proud of their institutions, developing them in peace and quiet from good to better continually.

Now, in order that we may do this, that we may enter on our new duties in this temper of mind, I do not hesitate to say I think it is above all things necessary we should approach the questions that regard the status of this, our Provincial Legislature, in the union, free from that belittling spirit which, I am sorry to see, does prevail in some quarters. So sure as this temper is shown in high places—so sure as any considerable party among our people set themselves to belittle the provincial portion of the institutions of this our Federative system, so surely there must grow up a strong counter-party, and an agitation which, tending to develop the Federative principle, and to augment the importance of the Provinces at the expense of the Dominion, must have the worst results; not merely the result of raising irritating sectional cries, and of renewing agitation for changes of constitution—bad as that must be—but of raising cries tending to disorganisation, and creative of divisions and disorders in the nature of revolutionary agitation. We must be on our guard against all attempts at representing the Provinces as of small importance, whose affairs can be conducted easily, and the mode of conducting which is a mere secondary matter. The Provinces in our system have no municipal character. There are those who talk of them as great municipalities. [Cheers.] But the Legislature of this Province, and the Legislatures of the other Provinces have no municipal character whatever. [Cheers.] They are the Parliamentary creators of municipalities. [Renewed cheering.] The municipalities are our creatures, subordinate to us here. We are not simply at the head of the municipal system; we are above that system, its masters, its makers. None of the functions of the Provinces have a municipal character. They are not derived from the Dominion; they are not dependent on the Dominion; their authority is not subordinate to that of the Dominion. It has far more the character of co-ordination. It is derived from the same authority; it is a division of the functions of the whole system; not into higher and lower, nor into larger and lesser; it is a division of functions, founded on state considerations of convenience. Certain functions, over a wide territorial space, are thrown upon one body called a Parliament; and certain other functions, not less important to those under their government, devolve on the organizations of the Provinces.