

ence exercised on the public men of the Province. In other countries the road to influence and power in the State is by a career of consistent adherence to principle; but here the road to what is called success in public life for an Upper Canadian has been by abnegating, when he got to the seat of Government, all the professions that won him the confidence of his constituents. Lower Canadian views and feelings have been very different from those of Upper Canada—but Lower Canada has held the gate of office, and he who would enter the official portal had to forget his old Western opinions and bow low to the enunciations of the East. Need I remind you how many Upper Canadians have entered public life high in hope and giving promise of a bright career, but who speedily lost the confidence of their constituents by thus ignoring the principles on which they were elected? And need I remind you, also, of the effect of such scenes on the public mind—the loss of faith in public men—the general belief that the contests of public life were but a fight for office? Much, very much, has there been to condemn in the public events of the last ten years—much has there been in the conduct of public men to deplore—but it would be useless to deny that a large portion of the wrong and error that have been committed, directly resulted from the demoralizing influence to which public men have been exposed. But two instances have we in modern history of countries enjoying free institutions with the same difficulties to contend against. Holland and Belgium were bound together in 1815 under circumstances almost identical with those of Canada—but the union was found totally unworkable, and in the short space of fifteen years the discontent issued in open revolt, and the connection was rent asunder. In the United States of America, the Union between freedom in the North and slavery in the South produced the same sectional evils, but in a more aggravated form than those we have had to deplore. The slave power was the prominent influence in the State—he who would rise in public life had to bow before its mandates—the utter demoralization of Northern politicians was the result—and it is not to be denied that had the general Government of the Republic been, like ours, legislative and not federal, an open rupture of the alliance would have come long before it did in the desolating civil war now raging beyond our lines. Was it in human nature that the people of Upper Canada should have patiently submitted to such injustice? Is it at all surprising that acrimony and discord should have been the result of so deplorable a state of affairs? Was it not clearly our duty to combine at all hazards, and by every means within our reach, for the speedy and complete reform of a system so hurtful and unjust? (Cheers.) For one, I am free to say that I look back on the agitation of the last twelve years, with all its attendant strife and discord, without a shadow of regret. I have all along regarded it—and I see it more clearly to-day than I ever did before—that all that agitation and discord was the painful, but the absolutely necessary, ordeal through which we had to pass to the accomplishment of our great purpose. (Cheers.) For many years before I entered Parliament, I had been behind the scenes, and perceived all the evils of our political system as plainly as we do to-day; and when I first became a candidate for a seat in Parliament in 1851, it was with the avowed intention of laboring, in season and out of season, for a reform of the constitutional relations between Upper and Lower Canada. My friend, Mr. Mackenzie, of Lambton, whom I am glad to see on the hustings to-day—(cheers)—was with me in that first contest; his brother, Mr. Hope Mackenzie, my colleague in the North Riding, and my friend Mr. McKellar, of Kent, were also active participants in that contest, and they could tell you how