

impassioned eloquence would sweep, as with the force of a tornado, bearing down all before them.

In the year 1835, he was appointed solicitor-general of the province, which office was at that time non-political. It was not until the year 1838 that Mr. Johnston, yielding to the earnest solicitation of Sir Colin Campbell, the then governor of Nova Scotia, consented to enter the Legislative Council, and commence his political career. Here his talents at once raised him to distinction, and he became the acknowledged leader of the Conservative party. He took a prominent part in the struggles attending the introduction of responsible government, and, while acknowledging the effiteness of the old regime, and recognising the rights of the people to control public affairs through their representatives, he yet deemed it necessary to watch with care, and efficiently to guard, the very radical changes sought to be made in the political constitution.

In the year 1843, Mr. Johnston was appointed attorney-general of the province; on the dissolution of the House of Assembly in that year, he resigned his seat in the Legislative Council, and entered the popular branch, as representative of the important county of Annapolis, which constituency he continued uninterruptedly to represent until his elevation to the bench. A large part of Mr. Johnston's political life was spent in opposition, a position for which his forensic and declamatory talent, and his power of invective, eminently qualified him. He, however, on several occasions, led the Government with rare political tact and ability, and his party not only followed him with unfaltering fidelity and unbounded confidence, as their political chief, but had for him a respect, and a devoted personal attachment, accorded to few public men, but engendered by his commanding talents, his many noble qualities, his unselfish regard for others, and his unswerving integrity.

Mr. Johnston was selected as one of the delegates to meet Lord Durham, the high commissioner for settling the difficulties in Canada, and confer with him on the contemplated changes in colonial government.

Among the many Acts on the statute book that bear testimony to his sagacity and forecast, stands foremost the simultaneous polling bill, in which provision is made for the holding elections in every county in the province on one and the same day, instead of the poll being kept open in each county from six to ten days, according to its size, and remove about from place to place. In 1856, on a change of Government, Mr. Johnston again became premier and attorney-general, and at once bent all his energies to abolishing the monopoly which the general mining association held over all the mines and minerals of Nova Scotia. In June, 1857, having associated with himself Adams G. Archibald, the present governor of the province, then a leading member of the opposition, Mr. Johnston left for England, and, after a good deal of negotiation, succeeded in effecting a compromise, by which the general mining association ceded to the Government their rights over all the then unworked mines.

To Mr. Johnston belongs the honor of being the first statesman who, in the halls of Legislature, advocated the union or confederation of these North American colonies. In the year 1854, on the floor of the House of Assembly, he moved—"That the union of the British provinces on just principles, while calculated to perpetuate their connection with the parent state, would promote their advancement and prosperity, increase their strength and influence, and elevate their position." Before the union was consummated, he had retired from public life, and was, therefore, in no way responsible for the details of the scheme; yet there can be no doubt that his advocacy of the measure, on its broad basis, tended to create and educate public opinion, and smoothed the way for those who eventually succeeded in effecting this important