

and that the British North America Act should be amended by the Imperial Parliament to bring about that result. A political party loses its memory when its passions are aroused and its immediate interests are concerned. The great constitutional conflict, the result of which bestowed on the people of the Provinces, through their representatives in the Legislatures the right of self-government, free from the interference of the Imperial Parliament in their local concerns, had been to a great extent excited by that interference; and now, the minority, which certainly had profited as much by the "boon" of responsible government as the majority, were eager to invite that interference, which, if forced upon it, would arouse the wildest indignation. The Imperial Government had encouraged Confederation with the view of placing the Provinces in a more independent position, and getting rid more completely of the necessity of interfering in their local matters; the course taken since Confederation by the Imperial Government has shown an unwillingness to interfere in local matters, or questions affecting the rights of the Provinces guarded by the constitution, and it is extremely unlikely that they will ever be induced to propose to the Imperial Parliament to amend the Act of the constitution, especially in provisions essential to the independence of the Local Legislatures, without the consent of the Provinces interested.

The Dominion Government was placed in rather an embarrassing position; its leading members had, when in opposition, encouraged the minority in pressing their demands; but now, instead of being the heads of an assaulting party, they were in the place of defenders of the constitution. They could now see clearly the danger of allowing attacks to be made upon it; and though their sympathy for the minority might be patriotic and not political, they could not as guardians of the union join in any action that would endanger it. If they could not vanquish the difficulty openly, they could go round it. They could openly oppose any attempt to encroach upon the powers of the Local Legislatures, and still give the minority sympathy and support. They might induce members to pledge themselves not to vote for any resolution that incited Imperial Legislation, by recommending a course of action, that without any seeming violence, might bring about the result desired. Notice of a resolution was given by the Hon. Edward Blake (the foremost man of the liberal party, and all through the contest a strong supporter of the minority demands) regretting that the hope expressed by Parliament in 1872 had

not been realized, and moving for an address to the Queen, praying that Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to use Her influence with the Legislature of New Brunswick to procure such a modification of the School Act as would remove any just grounds of discontent.

The Premier, the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, in his place in Parliament, invited the House to consent to the proposition that Imperial legislation encroaching on any of the powers reserved to the Provinces would violate their constitution, and that to incite it would endanger their right of self-government, and the House did by a large majority consent, and did also by a similar large majority agree to the further proposition that the Blake resolution, which was proposed by the Hon. J. E. Cauchon (Quebec centre) should be added thereto, and that both should be embodied in an address to the Queen.

The course taken had the effect of raising a sort of misunderstanding amongst the representatives of the minority. One of the leaders of the Irish Roman Catholic party, who had made himself specially prominent in declaiming that the minority would besiege every government and every parliament until justice was meted out to it, voted with the large majority, declaring that he did so with the knowledge and consent of the Catholic Bishop of St. John New Brunswick. The statement was denied by extremists, who opposed the royal address, praying for the exercise of Her Majesty's influence, as a step, which would in its issue lead to no practical or satisfactory result, and merely postponed the difficulty which would return next year upon Parliament with more perplexing force than ever.

By inviting the Royal influence, the Dominion Government, no doubt, hope that such a pressure will be brought to bear on, the Legislature of New Brunswick as to induce it to yield to the demands made by the minority, and thus relieve them from their embarrassment.

So the question stands for the present awaiting Imperial action on the Royal Address. The Government of New Brunswick, backed by an overwhelming majority in the Legislature, has not receded from the position taken in the protest of the 29th May, 1872; it rests on constitutional ground. Though on that ground the Government has been supported, it has received little sympathy from the political leaders and representatives of the Dominion at large. The Parliament of Canada is seemingly governed by the traditions of the past; that it is still under the influence of the minority that has done so much to shape the course of history in the past,