

to some extent caused the necessity of that dissolution—the policy of postponing the settlement of the great questions then pending with regard to the Clergy Reserves and the Seigniorial Tenure until a new parliament should be elected, is one which I am perfectly certain the public opinion of this country will sustain when all the present contentions are over, and I believe that nothing will have a greater tendency to secure a satisfactory adjustment of those questions than the course of the administration at that time. The dissolution of Parliament took place. The result was precisely what we had anticipated. A very large majority of the members elected were in favor of those measures and especially of the one in relation to the Clergy Reserves which was brought most prominently before the country. His Excellency has been advised to state in the speech from the throne that the opinion of the country has been expressed upon that question in no equivocal terms. I am sure honorable members on all sides of the house will admit that there can be no doubt about that. Well, Sir, we met Parliament; up to that time we had every reason to believe that the government would be sustained. The first question which arose, as a matter of course, was the election of a Speaker. I may be permitted to say, now that it is all over, that I had a very strong opinion upon that subject, and I shall state that opinion without any reservation. That opinion was that if we were beaten on the Speakership, the Government could not last a week. I say this because certain Members of this House professing to be friends of the Administration but who pride themselves on not being “party men,” thought the question of the Speakership one of no importance whatever to the country, and determined to vote for whoever they pleased. Well, the election for Speaker took place, and the Government was beaten by a majority of three. From the time that division took place we have had indications every day—aye every hour, that gentlemen whom we had reason to expect were friends of the Administration did not intend to support it.