

this subject will be approached in a fairer and a calmer spirit. I had hoped that that time had arrived. We have been told, Sir, that Education is henceforward to be the battle ground of party—and that public men are to rise or fall—to be elevated or overthrown, upon this field, which should be dedicated to peace and generous exertion. By God's blessing this shall never be—but, Sir, the time shall come, when, if Education's but mentioned here, faction shall be hushed—personal rivalries forgotten—and ambition shall plume her wing for noble flights above the mire and strife of party. This, it may be said, is strange language to fall from my lips. Perhaps so—My own example may be quoted to condemn my precept, by those who mistook for a work of choice the dire necessities of my public position.

In this matter, as in many others, my principles and views may have been misunderstood. Struggling for a Constitution for our country, for the defences and securities of freedom, without which education, property, and even life itself, are of little value; engrossed by one object, and keeping it steadily in view, turning my face to the enemy wherever he appeared, it was not possible for me always to choose my weapons or my ground. Like the soldier combatting in hot blood, when the bitter waters of the sin were stirred to their very fountain, I may have besieged the Temples, from which the enemy fired, and smote them between the horns of the altar. But, now that the strife is over, (and that it is, the bills upon the table prove,*) I would be the first to repair the walls—to wash the stains of conflict from the pavement, and, if I dare not repent of what the cause in which I was engaged forbids me to regard as sacrifice, my heart may yet exult when the solemn strains of harmony rise again above the din of battle.

This question, above all others, pre-eminently demands the consideration, and the united action of the government. The time is not far distant when it will be so regarded, and the measures requisite so matured. But, unfortunately, at the present moment it cannot be wisely dealt with by any party, or set of men, that can aspire to conduct an administration. The passions, the prejudices, of the past, have not yet subsided, and union of sentiment, in a population so diversified as ours by contrariety of religious opinion, is not easy of attainment. I look along the ranks of the Opposition, on political questions sufficiently united—on this they are a rope of sand; and, judging from the opinions expressed by my own political associates, in this debate, they are, even on the collegiate branch of the subject, which is not the most important, divided into three sections. My honorable friend from Yarmouth and some others, are for no college at all—the Speaker and his followers are for a college in Halifax at some indefinite time after the others are destroyed; while my learned friend from Pictou is for a college any where, but without the slightest indication of when it is to be found.

* The Civil List and Departmental Bill.

ed, or where it is to be. With such a diversity of sentiment prevailing in the province the Lieutenant Governor thus wisely called our attention to the subject of Education in his opening speech:

“The acts which provide for the support of Education, and for the encouragement of Agriculture, will shortly expire; and I shall be gratified if, in the renewed consideration of these very prominent interests, the experience of the past conduct you to harmonious and successful legislation.”

It is in this spirit, Mr. Chairman, that I approach the question. Instructed by the experience of the past; and convinced that, by mutual concessions, harmony can be secured, our labours may be successful. The Bill before the house is no novelty to me. I have voted for it two or three times, and shall now. It was originally introduced by my hon. friend the late member for Londonderry, in 1843, as a part of the general subject, then under discussion. In 1845, when my hon. friend for Yarmouth again asked leave to introduce it, I voted with him. On neither of those occasions did I regard it more highly than I do now—as a detail of a general question—a fragment of a great subject—a limb of the Tree that we were to prune and water, but not the tree itself. My objections, then, have been not to the Bill, but to the mode in which we have been irregularly, and, as I conceive, most unwisely dragged into an educational discussion, by which at last but one question can be decided, and that in a mode unnecessarily vindictive and ungracious. The learned introducer of this Bill, had he done me the honor to consult me on the subject, would but have evinced the confidence displayed towards himself and others, upon most important occasions. Had he paused to reflect that this topic might have been discussed and disposed of, with some regard to the position of the hon. and learned leader of the Government, and to the sentiments he was known to entertain, he might have felt that there were reasons for going into committee of the whole which could be more easily imagined than explained. But, whatever the motive which denied the ordinary courtesy, and to our friends the advantage of the usual consultation—for myself I make no complaint. I am ready to meet the question now, or at any time—and as to my learned friend and colleague, whether the Bill was designed, as it was calculated, to place him in a false position, I rejoice that he has manfully defended his favorite Institution, and though divided from his political supporters, has thrown, by his felicitous eloquence, and graceful independence, a charm over even an untenable position.

When, on a former day, I moved to go into committee of the whole on the general state of the Province, to consider the subject of Education, I did so, 1st, because to debate that subject on this Bill would be a needless waste of time. Was I right? Four days have been spent, a single point is not yet settled, and the general subject scarcely approached. 2nd. I feared that by an attack on a single Institution