

MINISTERIAL EXPLANATIONS.

IMMEDIATELY after the defeat of the Government on Tuesday night, (the 14th,) and on the following morning, Mr. Brown spoke to several supporters of the Administration strongly urging that the present crisis should be utilized in settling for ever the constitutional difficulties between Upper and Lower Canada, and assuring them that he was prepared to cooperate with the existing, or any other Administration that would deal with this question promptly and firmly, with a view to its final settlement.

Messrs. Morris and Pope asked and obtained leave, to communicate these conversations to Mr. John A. Macdonald and Mr. Galt.

On Thursday, at 3 P. M., just before the Speaker took the chair, Mr. John A. Macdonald said to Mr. Brown, whilst standing in the centre of the Assembly Room, that he had been informed of what he, Mr. Brown, had stated, and he wished to know if Mr. Brown had any objections to meet Mr. Galt and discuss the matter? He replied, certainly not.

Mr. Morris accordingly arranged an interview with Mr. Brown, and on Friday, the 17th June, about one P. M., Messrs. Macdonald and Galt called on Mr. Brown at the St. Louis Hotel. Mr. Brown stated that nothing but the extreme urgency of the present crisis, and the hope of settling the sectional troubles of the Province for ever, could, in his opinion, justify their meeting together with a view to common political action. Messrs. Macdonald and Galt were equally impressed with this, and stated that on that footing alone, the present meeting had been invited.

Mr. Brown asked in what position these Gentlemen came to him, whether as deputed by the Administration or simply as leading Members of the Ministerial party.

They replied they were charged by their Colleagues formally to invite his aid in strengthening the Administration with a view to the settlement of the sectional difficulties of Upper and Lower Canada. Mr. Brown then stated that, on grounds purely personal, it was quite impossible that he could be a Member of any Administration at present, and that even had this been otherwise, he would have conceived it highly objectionable that parties who had been so long and so strongly opposed to each other as he and some Members of the Administration had been, should enter the same Cabinet. He thought the public mind would be shocked by such an arrangement, but he felt very strongly that the present crisis presented an opportunity of dealing with this question that might never occur again. Both political parties had tried in turn to govern the Country, but without success, and repeated elections only arrayed sectional majorities against each other more strongly than before. Another general election at this moment presented little hope of a much altered result; and he believed that both parties were far better prepared than they had ever been before, to look the true cause of all the difficulty firmly in the face, and endeavour to settle the Representation question on an equitable and permanent basis. Mr. Brown added that if the Administration were prepared to do this, and would pledge themselves clearly and publicly to bring in a measure next Session that would be acceptable to Upper Canada, the basis to be now settled and announced in Parliament, he would heartily cooperate with them to try to induce his friends (in which he hoped to be successful) to sustain them until they had any opportunity of presenting their measure next Session.

Mr. Macdonald replied that he considered it would be essential that Mr. Brown himself should become a Member of the Cabinet, with a view to give guarantees to the Opposition and to the Country for the earnestness of the Government.

Mr. Brown rejoined that other Members of the Opposition could equally with himself, give that guarantee to their party and the Country by entering the Government in the event of a satisfactory basis being arrived at. He felt that his position had been such for many years as to place a greater bar in the way of his entering the Government than in that of any other Member of the Opposition.

Mr. Macdonald then said that he thought it would be necessary that Mr. Brown himself should, in any case, be identified with the negotiations that would necessarily have to take place, and that, if he did not himself enter the Cabinet, he might undertake a Mission to the Lower Provinces, or to England, or both, in order to identify himself with the action of the Canadian Government in carrying out the Measure agreed upon.

It was then suggested by Mr. Brown, and agreed to, that all questions of a personal character, and the necessary guarantees, should be waived for the present, and the discussion conducted with the view of ascertaining if a satisfactory solution of the sectional difficulty could be agreed upon.

Mr. Brown asked what the Government proposed as a remedy for the injustice complained of by Upper Canada, and as a settlement of the sectional trouble. Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Galt replied that their remedy was a Federal Union of all the British North American Provinces; local matters being committed to local bodies, and matters common to all to a General Legislature.

Mr. Brown rejoined that this would not be acceptable to the people of Upper Canada as a remedy for existing evils.

That he believed that Federation of all the Provinces ought to come, and would come about ere long, but it had not yet been thoroughly considered by the people; and even were this otherwise there were so many parties to be consulted, that its adoption was uncertain and remote.

Mr. Brown was then asked what his remedy was, when he stated that the Measure acceptable to Upper Canada would be Parliamentary Reform, based on population, without regard to a separating line between Upper and Lower Canada.

To this, both Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Galt stated that it was impossible for them to accede, or for any Government to carry such a Measure, and that, unless a basis could be found on the Federation principle suggested by the Report of Mr. Brown's Committee, it did not appear to them likely that anything could be settled.

After much discussion on both sides, it was found that a compromise might probably be had in the adoption either of the Federal principle for all the British North American Provinces, as the larger question, or for Canada alone, with provisions for the admission of the Maritime Provinces and the North Western territory, when they should express the desire. Mr. Brown contended that the Canadian Federation should be constituted first, in order that such securities might be taken, in regard to the position of Upper Canada, as would satisfy that Section of the Country, that in the negotiations with the Lower Provinces, the interests of Upper Canada would in no case be overlooked.

Further conversation ensued, but as the hour for the meeting of the House had nearly arrived, an understanding was come to that the state of the negotiations was such as to warrant the hope of an ultimate understanding; and it was agreed that that fact should be communicated to Parliament, and an adjournment until Monday asked for.

On Friday evening Mr. Galt saw Mr. Brown and arranged for an interview next morning, at which Sir Etienne Taché and Mr. Cartier should be present.

On Saturday, at ten A. M., other engagements requiring a change in the hour appointed, Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Galt called on Mr. Brown, and after further discussion, a second appointment was made for one P. M., when the Gentleman named, with Mr. Cartier, met in the Provincial Secretary's room, Sir Etienne Taché being out of town.

The consideration of the steps most advisable for the final settlement of the sectional difficulties was then entered upon fully, and a general accord seemed to exist that, as the views of Upper Canada could not be met under our present system the remedy must be sought in the adoption of the federal principle.