

MR. J. S. WILLISON

union of the Canadas. He seconded Brown's motions in 1864, declaring that the old legislative union was a failure, and could not be advantageously maintained, and that the remedy for the unsatisfactory conditions which then prevailed was to be found in the formation of two or more local governments, with some joint authority charged with such matters as were necessarily common to both sections of the province. This was the germ of Confederation; and it was natural that he should be selected as one of Brown's colleagues in the great Coalition Cabinet. Owing, however, to his appointment to the Vice-Chancellorship of Upper Canada he was for a time unable to advise upon the actual details of the British North America Act; and it is no doubt owing also to this incident that all his later years of political activity were devoted to provincial rather than to national affairs.

He was, however, greatly instrumental in determining the federal character of the Constitution. If he had remained in the Coalition Government he would doubtless have been the staunch ally of George Brown and Sir Geo. E. Cartier in resisting Sir John Macdonald's project of a legislative union, and in engrafting the principle of federalism firmly upon the new Constitution. His greater political achievements centre in his long and triumphant struggle with the Conservative leader to establish the ample constitutional powers of the provinces, and in particular to maintain the legislative