

colleagues. My political connection with South Ontario then ceased. I thought that my political life, too, had come to an end. But this was not to be. After I had been seven years on the Bench, Mr. Blake resigned his Premiership, and I found that he and his colleagues desired me to take his place. Mr. Brown also urged it; Senator McMaster too, and others. When, therefore, the Lieutenant-Governor sent for me, I accepted the task to which he invited me, though I did so with considerable hesitation, for judicial work was to me congenial work, and all financial reasons were against exchanging my Judgeship, which was a life office, for an uncertain Premiership. However, as I was led to make the change, notwithstanding all its drawbacks, I hope that my public life since has not been without advantage to my native Province. South Ontario was then represented by a good Reformer, and an able man, the late Mr. Abraham Farewell. It was necessary that I should have a seat in the Legislative Assembly, and I had the good fortune to be invited to North Oxford, and (as you know), I have represented that eminently Reform Riding ever since.

In 1879 you elected your present representative, Mr. Dryden, and you have reelected him at every opportunity since. I congratulate you on having so good a representative; and I have to thank my old constituency for the support which, through Mr. Farewell and Mr. Dryden, the Government has received from the riding during eighteen years of my Premiership. We found your member so exceptionally able and valuable, that in June, 1890, he became our honored Minister of Agriculture, and has in that capacity rendered grand service to the farming interests of the country, while he has also been useful in the general affairs of the Government and the Legislature. His sympathies, as you all know, are always with what is liberal, and straightforward, and good; and for the sake of the whole Province, I hope you will continue to elect him as long as he is willing to serve. Let it always be by large majorities, too. For a good Minister to have in his favor a large majority of his constituents is to increase in the country and the Legislature his influence for good.

PAST CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.—B. N. A. ACT.

Great constitutional and other reforms have become accomplished facts since I was your representative. The constitutional reforms were secured before I left the Government. I was an active member of the conference of the Provinces at Quebec, in 1864, where those terms of Confederation were agreed to which were afterwards embodied in the B.N.A. Act. This Act is no doubt capable of improvement. The experience of 27 years has shown this. But so far as concerns the constitutional grievances against which we had been contending, that Act has removed them.

The struggle which the Reform party was making when I was elected for your riding was for representation by population in the Legislature of United Canada, irrespective of the dividing line between Upper and Lower Canada; for the control by Upper Canada of its own local affairs; and for the absorption into Canada of the vast territory then claimed by the Hudson Bay Company. The Protestants of Upper Canada were under alarm and excitement from the power which, through French-Canadian influence, Roman Catholics possessed in the united Parliament of the Province, and some of the fruits of which from time to time appeared in legislation distasteful to Upper Canada Protestants, respecting Separate Schools, and respecting other ecclesiastical matters. Further legislation in the same directions was feared. On the subject of the schools, the basis of the new system agreed to was