

time may have come when it may be possible to record with impartiality and brevity the dangers of the crisis which beset the early years of the Dominion, and which nearly throttled in the cradle the infant which we fondly hope will yet prove to be a Hercules.

Late on the evening of September 18, 1867, the telegraph reported far and wide that in the Nova Scotia Elections the Confederate party had fared badly; and when, next day, it was ascertained beyond a doubt that a "clean sweep" had been made at the polls, that out of 18 members Dr. Tupper alone would plead for Confederation and justify his own policy in the House of Commons, and that in the local House of Assembly two Confederates alone would confront 36 Antis, anxious thoughts everywhere followed the receipt of the news. Not only did the more immediate promoters of the Union feel some anxiety for its safety, not to say for their own positions; but those who had regarded it with some disfavour, and even the Anti-confederates of New Brunswick who had acquiesced in the inevitable, and had had three months' experience of the dreaded change, were hardly prepared for a sudden return to old ways; commerce, already walking in new paths, looked uneasily on the future; and even the victors in Nova Scotia, when the first flush died off their faces, were somewhat embarrassed by their own success. What will they do with it?—was the general and anxious enquiry.

But, some of our younger and our foreign readers will ask, what brought about this state of affairs? Briefly, this:—The approval which the "Quebec Scheme" in its somewhat crude entirety met with from the English Ministry was full and prompt, and Mr. Cardwell lost not a moment in enjoining on the Governors of the B. N. A. Provinces the desirability of taking speedy action upon it. Some of those gentlemen were, for reasons which it was understood they had not hesitated to express, not

favourably disposed to the measure. They knew at least as well as the Colonial Office the real motives which had prompted its inception and necessitated its completion. They thought they had reason to distrust its authors and to be sceptical about its ultimate success. They saw lions in the path; the demerits and disadvantages were patent; the gain was, to them, problematical. However, their chief's commandment was urgent. As a matter of fact, we believe that the Lieutenant-Governors of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (Sir Richard Macdonnell and Mr. Gordon) did suggest that the development of the new policy should be entrusted to hands and heads more impressed with its benefits and more likely earnestly to carry it out than their own. But, if tendered, their resignations were not then accepted.

Action was first taken in New Brunswick. Mr. Gordon and his Government agreed that Parliament should be dissolved and the sense of the country taken upon the question of Union. The result at first was eminently disastrous. The furnace into which the scheme was plunged was exceeding hot, and it and those who plunged it in were alike consumed. Nova Scotia took warning, and pursued a policy of inaction. The Colonial Office took note of events, and whilst it launched against New Brunswick the vials of such wrath as a Mother Country can safely launch against a small colony that runs counter to her wishes, it no longer pressed for an immediate reply from Nova Scotia. Sir R. G. Macdonnell, however, accepted promotion (?) to Hong Kong, and Sir Fenwick Williams brought to Halifax a despatch which, while it passed a doubtful compliment on that gallant officer and his native Province of which he was appointed Governor, left in no doubt the wishes of Her Majesty's Government regarding Confederation. Early in 1866 events, into which it is needless for us to enter, brought on another General Election in New Brunswick; the