

my opinion, nothing but the hope of settling forever the sectional troubles of the Province, could justify men so opposed as we had been for years, meeting together with a view to united political action—and in this Messrs. Macdonald and Galt entirely acquiesced. I then asked in what position they came to me, 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 my aid in strengthening the Administration with a view to the settlement of the sectional difficulties between Upper and Lower Canada. My answer at once was that, on grounds purely personal, it was quite impossible that I could be a member of any Administration at present; but that even had this been otherwise, I would have conceived it highly objectionable that parties who had been so long and so strongly opposed to each other, should enter the same Cabinet. I thought the public mind would be shocked by such an arrangement; but I felt very strongly that the present crisis presented an opportunity of dealing with this question that might never occur again, and if the Administration were prepared to 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, I would heartily co-operate with them and try to induce my friends to sustain them until they had an opportunity of maturing their measure. Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Galt then contended, that with a view to giving confidence to the Opposition and the country in the arrangement—it was essential I should enter the Government; I denied this, and contended that other members of the Opposition could give that guarantee equally with myself, and might be disposed to enter the Government. It was finally agreed that we should waive all personal matters for the present, and ascertain first whether a satisfactory basis could be agreed upon. After many interviews with Sir Etienne Tache, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Cartier, and Mr. Galt, we finally agreed upon the following basis, as one which we believed would be satisfactory to Upper Canada and acceptable to Lower Canada:

“The Government are prepared to pledge themselves to bring in a measure, next session, for the purpose of removing existing difficulties by introducing the Federal principle into Canada, coupled with such provision as will permit the Maritime Provinces and the North-west territory to be incorporated into the same system of Government.

“And the Government will seek, by sending representatives to the Lower Provinces, and to England, to secure the assent of those interests which are beyond the control of our own legislation to such a measure as may enable all British North America to be united under a general Legislature based upon the Federal principle.”

I was now in a position to submit a definite proposition to my political friends, and without delay I called a meeting of the Upper Canada Reformers in the House of Assembly. There are 41 of us in all, of whom 39 were present. There were but two absentees, and both, I believe, go heartily with the new arrangement. Doubtless you have all seen the resolutions adopted at that meeting. The result was, that the basis which had been agreed upon was all but unanimously accepted. The Conservative members of Parliament also held a meeting. Mr. John A. Macdonald, I understand, explained to them the conclusion we had arrived at, and they endorsed the scheme almost as unanimously as the Liberal party had done. Then came the question how the compact was to be carried out. The Government had proposed that three members of the Opposition should accept seats in the Cabinet; with a number of our friends Mr. Mowat and I strongly objected to that, and con-