

On the results of this, the first session of the Provincial Legislature, Sir Hastings Doyle at least could look back with complacency. He had more than held his own; he had gained much more for the Confederate cause than time, valuable as that was—he had made his power felt, and had sensibly weakened his adversaries. The Assembly from which so much had been expected, the Ministry whose only policy was Repeal, had not only utterly failed to fulfil their promises, but had come out of the contest decidedly worsted. Their prestige was gone: their credit for honesty of purpose and vigour of execution was irretrievably shaken. Difficulties there might, and probably would, be still to be encountered before the agitation finally subsided, but Unionists from this time felt that, practically, the danger was past.

Soon after the close of the Session all doubts as to Mr. Howe's position were removed by the appearance of a letter from that gentleman, in which he avowed his disapproval of the policy of the Anti-confederate party; expressed his opinion that Repeal was absolutely unattainable, and announced that he was prepared fairly to consider a proposal for "better terms" for the Province, which the Finance Minister of Canada had made to him. This declaration, although long expected by those who were behind the scenes, created, of course, a great sensation, and, acting on the throats and brains of his *quondam* friends much as a dose of sods acts on the great Geyser, was the occasion of an alarming ebullition of mud and hot water. The "traitor's" former services and his old reputation were alike forgotten. From the crest of the wave of popularity he sank into the trough of the sea of abuse; and he found himself holding the key of the situation, and yet almost alone. He maintained that the course which he was adopting was the only feasible one; and he challenged his opponents to prove either the practicability of Repeal, or to sug-

gest anything else that was preferable to the line which he recommended. They could not answer his challenge, but they would not follow his lead; while the Confederate party, some from jealousy and some from fear of perplexing the situation still further, kept aloof from him. Associating with himself Mr. McLellan, a gentleman who had apparently achieved some local reputation as a financier, Mr. Howe had a conference with Sir John Rose, and after a lengthy negotiation an agreement was come to by which Nova Scotia was to be placed, approximately, in the financial relation towards the other members of the Confederation, which the "Antis" maintained was only her due, but which they alleged that the original delegates, in their haste or their ignorance, had failed to obtain for her. Mr. Howe's success in negotiating "better terms" was, of course, to his old associates more unendurable than even his original defection from their side. True, they had themselves no policy to propose beyond a vague suggestion of a second delegation to Downing Street, or a dreamy notion that something might be done towards resuscitating the old plan of a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces. They had dallied with Annexation, and found that it would not pay. They are even said to have approached General Butler, but "he of the spoons" had failed them. They had always muddled up the question of "better terms" with the cry for Repeal; but now, when they confessedly could not themselves obtain the latter, they turned against the man who had, for them, obtained the former. When Mr. Howe, in order, as it was said, to prove his sincerity, and to aid the Government in carrying through the House of Commons his agreement with Sir John Rose, suddenly accepted office and a seat in the Dominion Cabinet, the whole, or nearly the whole, Anti-confederate party, backed by the influence and resources of the Local Government, opposed his re-election for Hants County. His defeat would,