

Who is there that does not recollect the denunciations which the dismissal of a Sheriff called forth from the opposition of which the hon. Attorney General was leader. And yet, sir, within the last few weeks, a Sheriff has, for some trumpety charges, of the nature of which I am not sufficiently cognisant, been ejected by the present government from his office. Mr. McLean enjoyed the esteem and confidence of all parties in the county of Cumberland, yet he is wickedly and unjustly sacrificed at the bidding of a small section who have rent the Conservative party in twain.

Sir, it was the misfortune of the leaders of the present administration, when in opposition, to forget that they might one day return to power. English statesmen are always controlled by the wholesome recollection that the accident and changes of parties may place them at the head of affairs, in which case they would be of necessity compelled to carry out their principles. For this reason, sir, although the government might have been defeated on that pet measure of the hon. Attorney General—the Maine Liquor Law—at the last session, I forbore to commit myself or my party to a principle which we did not believe to be sound. Sir, with my present impressions, the best office in the gift of the government would not have tempted me to desert what I believed to be a religious and moral duty, and ignore the policy I had conscientiously pursued. How different is it with the hon. and learned Attorney General;—suddenly he becomes convinced that a measure he had so long advocated and supported with the utmost favor requires an airing,—the bill is dropped and we hear of it no more.

But, sir, allow me to say that the misfortune and the weakness of the late government was the eternal, irritating and undue pressure of the Catholic body. I adhere to the political principles which I announced in the session of 1857—“Equal rights to all classes and creeds, ascendancy to none, proscription to none.” On behalf of the Liberal party, I emphatically deny that they desire, or purpose if they had the power, to proscribe the Catholic body or refuse them their legitimate and fair claims. But, sir, when the Catholic body grossly abuse their position—when they seek to assume a higher stand, and exercise a wider and more extended influence than that to which they are legitimately entitled—when eight or ten members have the power (and exercise it) of moving in a body across the floor of the house, and defeating an administration, because they do not obtain a Speakership for this, or a Financial Secretaryship for that co-religionist—it becomes the duty of Protestants to curtail and confine their influence within fair and proper bounds. When the Protestant members of this house were asked to perpetrate a double job—for I can designate it by no other term—in one and the same session, for the members of one and the same family, and a section of their supporters stand behind to enforce the demand, then indeed, sir, the time had arrived when some action should be taken to confine the Catholic power within just limits. To the operation and effect of that influence alone is to be attributed the dismissal of Mr. Forman,—to the pressure brought to bear for that end the government weakly and criminally yielded.

Now, sir, I see by the speech that questions of the largest interest and value are about to be

submitted for the consideration of the Legislature. The question of a union of the Colonies, one of the most important ever presented to a Colonial Legislature, for the first time comes before us in an official shape. If indeed, sir, we are to have a Federal and not a Legislative Union of these Colonies—if the Canadas are to be divided, and that extensive and fertile region lying between Lake Superior and Red River to be erected into new dependencies, and these with the Lower Provinces to form one grand confederation, then indeed we are called upon to deliberate on a subject of the largest extent. To frame such a measure—to propound and carry out a great question of intercolonial policy, requires a strong government. That we have not at this day an Executive that can safely be entrusted with such a power must be apparent to every man who views carefully the state of public opinion—who knows that the mind of the people has undergone a thorough and complete revolution. So, sir, with the Intercolonial Railway; that question also requires a vigorous, able and strong government to carry it out.

Now, sir, with respect to the delegation allow me to say, that although I do not wish to refer personally to the gentlemen appointed, yet, sir, I do think that if the men whose capacity for public business best suited them for the performance of such a public duty had been chosen, the two who were appointed, would not have been the men. We have heard that the Parliamentary experience which the hon. Provincial Secretary wants was to be supplied by the hon. and learned member for Sydney. Some parts of that experience, perhaps, he might have been better with out.

Mr. HENRY,—I agree with the hon. and learned member for Inverness.

Hon. Mr. YOUNG,—That portion of the hon. gentleman's experience to which I refer, was in the session of 1857, when he deserted and abandoned his party, and violated every rule of political morality, and every principle of honorable obligation. I would have blushed to my inmost soul to have done what the hon. gentleman was not ashamed to do. Sir, had he not interrupted me, I should not have uttered this opinion, but it is my opinion and I am ready to defend it.

In conclusion, sir, I stated at the opening that I did not intend to address the house at any great length; it will be for the majority of this house to declare in the face of those constituencies, whose ratification of their acts they will soon require, whether this imbecile, tottering administration—powerless for good but all powerful for evil, should longer continue to misgovern the country. I now beg leave therefore, without further preface, to move the following amendment to the Address:—

“But in view of this and other questions of the largest magnitude, which will come before Parliament for their deliberation during the present Session, and of the policy of the recent delegation, we deem it due to your Excellency respectfully to declare that the constitutional advisers of your Excellency do not possess the confidence of this House, nor of the people we represent, and that a change in the administration has become indispensable, for the vigorous and faithful prosecution of the public works and business of the Province.”