

Byron, N. Y.  
Stockton, Cal.

tion he utters to the people of Ontario against me for having assisted in the great work of union, in which the Province of Ontario, from its position, benefitted in every possible way, recoils on the hon. the First Minister. I may quote the speech of the hon. member for South Bruce (Mr. Blake) who, on a public platform affirmed that the greatest boon ever achieved by Canada was the union of the British Provinces; and of all the Provinces, Ontario had most reason to be proud and satisfied. The resolution that two-thirds of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia voted down, asking that the question be referred to the people at the polls, was only a copy of the resolution moved in the Legislature of Canada, and voted down by the hon. the First Minister, as one not required and not constitutional. I, therefore, wish to remind the hon. gentleman that every intelligent man in Ontario will feel that the hon. member is using a boomerang which comes back and strikes himself and his friends. It was upon the question of the Union of the Provinces that the hon. the Minister of Militia deserted myself and the party with which I was connected, and that is his sole title to the claim to be a Reformer. Nevertheless, the very man who did his little best to prevent that great measure being carried is received with open arms by a First Minister, who justly considers it one of his proudest boasts to have had a humble share as a member of the Parliament of Canada in bringing about the accomplishment of that great result. I need not say that, under the hostility that was excited, under the base betrayal of myself by the parties to whom I had most right to look for support in Ontario and elsewhere, in the press and otherwise, a great anti-union wave swept over Nova Scotia, and the hon. the Minister of Militia floated to the surface. We went back, after five years, after experience had exposed the fallacies by which that great question had been met. What was the result? It was that the hon. member for Halifax was defeated, and that I had the proud triumph of coming back to this Parliament, and being able to say on the floor of this House that not a single

man had been returned from Nova Scotia opposed to the Government of which I was a member, and only one who was in a position to be called an Independent member. I need not go through the various steps that led to the downfall of the Dominion Government in 1873. In that year the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie) was called upon to form an Administration. What then? As every one knows, the hon. gentleman made a midnight surprise and attack upon the constituencies of Canada. I will not use the words of Mr. Disraeli in relation to a somewhat similar act done by Mr. Gladstone, when he said it was an act of "black treachery!" I will not use such strong language, but say it was a midnight surprise, because I wish to be moderate in the expressions I use in relation to this and other matters, and the strength of the position will enable us to exercise that moderation. It was a midnight surprise. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Mackenzie), at a recent public demonstration in Ontario, asked the question if anybody supposed he was idiot enough to attempt to carry on the Government with the Parliament elected in 1872. I think what has taken place between 1874 and the present time will satisfy every person that the hon. gentleman exercised a wise discretion in going to the country at that time. It was, however, a surprise, not to me, not to the Conservative party in the country alone, but it was a bitter surprise, not only to the gentlemen who sit behind him, but to his own colleagues. When I tell this House that the first information one of the Cabinet Ministers had that there was a dissolution and that he was to go back to his constituents, was from your humble servant. That the hon. Premier had not entrusted to his own colleagues the fact that he intended to dissolve Parliament, I think I am warranted in using strong language. The hon. the Premier, when called upon to form an Administration, sent half a dozen gentlemen to their constituencies for re-election, and then, before they took their seats, dissolved the Parliament to which they were elected. That it was a surprise to his