

could be arranged. My own observations and experience were confirmed by the opinion, frankly expressed, by our tried friend and advocate, John Bright.

From the day that I returned home I never concealed my convictions from anybody, and have never changed my opinion. Others encouraged the belief that a change of government in England would give us repeal, and for six months the people of Nova Scotia have been deluded with hopes as baseless as a vision of the night. I would not lend myself to this deception, and became involved in a controversy with those who wished to conceal the truth. Minutes of Council and Resolutions were framed and sent to England, and another Delegation was promised. Threats of violence were held out, never intended to be realized, and a conflict was provoked with the Lieutenant-Governor, ending in apologies and humiliations not pleasant to contemplate. With these movements I had nothing to do.

In the Despatch which the Duke of Buckingham addressed to Lord Monck in June last, while distinctly refusing to repeal the Act of Union, he threw upon the Canadian Ministers the obligation to enquire into the working of that Act, with a view to such modifications and changes as would make it more acceptable to the people of Nova Scotia. On leaving England I had but slender hopes that they would make any serious attempt to discharge themselves of this obligation in good faith, but when some of those Ministers came down here in August, and solemnly pledged themselves before a committee of the Convention to make the attempt, I claimed for them a fair hearing and due consideration of any propositions they might make. In taking this line I acted in the spirit of my third proposition, that "if we failed to accomplish the repeal of the Act, we should endeavour to modify and improve it."

The negotiation thus opened with the consent of that Committee, was followed up by a letter addressed to me by Sir John A. Macdonald on the 6th October. That letter demanded from me the most grave consideration. Had I refused to receive or reply to it, I should have assumed a responsibility of which, by no after act of my life, could I have discharged myself in the face of this country. Her Majesty's Government would have been informed that Nova Scotia refused negotiation—a very large sum of money, now happily within our reach, would have been lost; and when the Local Legislature met, they would have had no alternative but to raise that money by direct taxation, or to let the Roads and Bridges go down. I would not assume that responsibility, and if I had I should have been held to a sharp account by the Electors of Hants, to whom I had promised, at twenty public meetings, to modify and amend the Act if