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SPEECH OF THE



HON. L. S. HUNTINGTON, Q.C.

M.P. for the COUNTY of SHEFFORD,

*At the Dinner, given in his honour by his Constituents, at Waterloo,
on the 25th January, 1871.*

At the Dinner given by his Constituents to the Hon. L. S. Huntington, on the 25th January, 1871, after the preliminary proceedings, the Chairman, Mr. W. B. Heath, proposed the health of the guest of the evening.

In reply, the Hon. L. S. HUNTINGTON, who, on rising, was received with loud and prolonged cheers, said :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I rise to thank you for the honour you do me to-night with no idle compliments and no exaggerated expressions of gratitude. As my constituents, you have often paid me the highest honours a citizen may receive from his countrymen, and your confidence has been all the more disinterested and flattering, because you know I did not wield patronage nor court unduly the temporary triumphs of political power. You voluntarily isolated from your fortunes those nois, patriots whose political activities are stimulated by the immediate rewards which the patronage of the State may bestow. Such men are quick to scent the personal advantage of clinging always to the strong side, and it is their wont to sneer at your independent and disinterested views. I think it is fair that we, who have so often despised them, should laugh with the poet who caricatures them so cleverly—

As when "dog's meat" re-echoes through
the street,
Rush sympathetic dogs from their retreat;
Heam with bright blaze their suppliant
eyes,
Sink their hind legs, ascend their joyful
cries;
Then wild with hope or maddening to pre-
"all,
Points the quick ear and wags the expect-
tant tail"

I accept this delightful manifestation of your kindness as a proof that in some sense my constituents approve of my public conduct, and that at least you regard my mo-

tives as honorable, though my services may have been small. It has perhaps fallen to my lot too frequently to express opinions which, if not new, have been startling to my countrymen, and I have paid, without repining, the penalties of hostile criticism. But my opponents, though fierce in invective, and ingenious in the imputation of motives, have forgotten to point out the personal benefits to accrue from the statement of unpopular opinions and alliance to the fortunes of a minority. They have left it for you to show the world an example of the rewards which the people have in store for the honest and fearless discussion of public questions; and I confess to you that there is no reputation which, as a public man, I should more highly prize than that of daring to speak out, in advance of public opinion, when needful, and in defiance of temporary clamour; and no recognition of such a service could be more grateful to me than your kind welcome to-night. I do not propose to go over the same ground as when last I had the honour of addressing you. It was my duty then to call your attention to the political signs of the times, and to warn you to be setting your house in order for great possible and probable changes. I gave you my reasons for believing that Canada was passing through a state of political transition, and on the eve of great constitutional changes. I claimed nothing absolutely more than that the subject was ripe for discussion, and that our plain duty was to consider it candidly. My own views were distinctly stated, but subordinate to the voice of my countrymen, and in line with the policy of the empire. I said then, that England was embarrassed by her relations to her dependencies here, and that Canada was crippled by the restrictions of the connection. I told you that a spirit of national patriotism was indispensable to our growth