

posed—it was not contemplated—it was not suggested, at any rate publicly, whatever were the views privately held by the parties to that compact—that either of the two parties should lose its distinctive character, or that we would find ourselves upon the carrying out of that measure in a position which would require no reorganization of parties, as questions might arise leading to a difference of opinion in men's minds. It was not, at any rate, asserted at that time that the two parties should be dissolved, and that parties should arise afterwards only in consequence of the diversity of opinion in men's minds as to questions that might come up for consideration. The best proof that the alliance was not to dissolve parties was to be found in the facts connected with two elections which took place soon after its formation, and when appeals on behalf of the two parties were made to the constituents interested. The present Commissioner of Public Works, on appealing to his constituents for re-election, was opposed, and successfully opposed, by a Conservative; and in North Wentworth, a Conservative and Reformer went to the polls as such. The election of the former was urged by the Minister of Justice because he was "his candidate". These things showed that at that period the idea had not been mooted that there was an end of party by reason of the temporary alliance; or that parties would not revert to their original state as soon as the object of the alliance should be accomplished. When the object of that alliance was finally accomplished, the Minister of Justice was authorized to form a Cabinet for the Dominion, and he made proposals, the result of which was, that the Government was formed, composed partly of Conservatives and partly of Reformers. As he (Mr. Blake) understood it, the view in which that arrangement was made was this—it was conceded that the Reformers had a preponderance in Ontario, and so they were given three out of five seats to the Cabinet from that Province, and as to the whole Dominion, it was held that parties were tolerably evenly balanced; and so the Cabinet was pretty evenly balanced in its political character. They were balanced by six Reformers being taken in as Ministers, and six Conservatives, with one gentleman who, having been Conservative at one time, and at one time Reformer, was regarded as being peculiarly fitted for the position of umpire—(laughter)—to decide between the rights and wrongs of the Cabinet so composed. Hon. Senator Kenny fitted that very high and distinguished position. (Laughter).

[Mr. Blake (Durham West)]

When they heard this in Ontario, the Reform party was in a position to carry a majority in the Local House, and at any rate a very strong delegation in this. They heard it from those gentlemen in the Cabinet to whom it was supposed the interests of the Reform party was particularly committed. They were told by the Commissioner of Public Works that the Reform cause and Reform party had passed away and was dead—that a new era of peace and good feeling had arisen, and that we were no longer to look back upon dead issues of the past. And then the doctrine was announced that parties were to be formed, not with regard to past differences, but as questions arose upon which men's minds would naturally differ, and that as there was now no great question agitating the country, there was no longer any necessity for party. They were told by the honourable gentlemen who had formerly represented their party, that they were no longer to regard the past, that party distractions were to be buried in oblivion, and that with the inauguration of the new Dominion, we would all commence anew with clean slates. They were told that this was the best course for the interests of the Reform party itself; for otherwise, it would be in a minority in the Councils of the country, and the Minister of Justice would form a Government of Conservatives exclusively, and have Reformers in Opposition. They were also told that partyism was a mistake, that the country was tired of political contention, and had enough of it, and that there should now be conciliation, peace and harmony on both sides. The doctrine was laid down that the best men should be selected irrespective of party, and that to be a party man was something discreditable. Everyone who professed to adhere to strong party views was denounced as an extreme man, but at the same time, a most strenuous and unscrupulous fight was carried on by those advocates of harmony, peace and conciliation. Those who opposed the Coalition were set down as most unreasonable men. There was something in the Government, it was said, to suit every taste—if it was a taste that could be pleased by a composition of that description. They were told moreover that, if they went into Opposition, they must necessarily ally themselves with the member for Hants (Hon. Mr. Howe) and his followers; that they would thereby ally themselves with annexationists, disloyal men and rebels—men who were coming here to plot against and destroy the constitution. Those slanders against his honourable friends from Nova