

"of our present system, while its enormous indirect cost would, in consequence of the additional checks on expenditure involved in the new system, and the more direct responsibility of public servants in the province, to the people immediately affected by such expenditure, be entirely obviated."

* * * * *

"The proposed system could in no way diminish the importance of the colony, or impair the credit, while it presents the advantage of being susceptible, without any disturbance of the federal economy, of such territorial extension as circumstances may hereafter render desirable."

In the session of 1861, I was prevented by illness from attending Parliament, and during the session of 1862 I was not a member. Early in the latter session, the Cartier-Macdonald Government was defeated, and Mr. Sandfield Macdonald was sent for by His Excellency to form a new Administration. Mr. Macdonald sought the assistance of Mr. Sicotte. Mr. Sicotte insisted that Mr. Macdonald should set peremptorily aside the whole question of Representative reform, and that the Government should stand pledged to vote it down whenever it should be presented. Mr. Sandfield Macdonald consented to this condition, and the Macdonald-Sicotte Administration was formed on that basis. I have always thought that that was a most unfortunate concession, and that no Upper Canadian should have been a party to them;—and when, a few months after, I accepted your invitation to present myself as a candidate for your suffrages, I so declared. Very shortly after I took my seat as your representative, the Macdonald-Sicotte Ministry was defeated and broken up, and the Macdonald-Dorion Administration took its place. Under this Government, Parliamentary reform again became an open question, and its Upper Canada Members and supporters were left at full liberty to agitate the question. I eagerly availed myself of the opportunity, and shortly after the commencement of the session of 1864 I moved for a Select Committee of twenty members to consider the whole question of our constitutional relations, and to suggest a remedy for existing evils. I placed on the committee the most prominent men of the House—men of all shades of opinion on this question. Some of them laughed at the proposition, and declared they would not act on such a committee, that the thing was absurd, and that it was impossible we could come to an agreement. But my reply was—"never mind the difficulties—let us try—at any rate, let us come together, and argue the matter out. The Cartier-Macdonald Administration declared there was a necessity for dealing with our constitutional difficulties—the Brown-Dorion Administration declared the same, and agreed to deal with them—the Reform Convention of Toronto, and the Liberal Convention of Lower Canada both declared that the thing must be met—and surely the difficulty is not so great, but we may succeed in arriving at some satisfactory understanding, if we go heartily at it." The committee was carried by a majority of eleven, and the most prominent members of the House were upon it, whether they liked it or not. I was chairman. At the first meeting, on the excellent suggestion of Mr. John A. Macdonald, we turned out the public, clerk, reporters and all, that we might the more freely consider and discuss the whole question in all its bearings. The result was, that, after a number of meetings, we actually did agree on a report, which was signed by 12 out of the 20 members of the committee; only three voted against the report; five were absent, but two or three of them, had they been present, would have signed the report. A great step had been gained by the appointment of the committee, but a still greater by the adoption of the report. The question was not, what we Upper Canadians would desire—there was no doubt or difficulty as to that—but what would be