

On the 8th of May following, on a question of want of confidence, the last mentioned administration found itself to be in a minority of five. Four days afterwards Parliament was prorogued with a view to its immediate dissolution. After the prorogation, Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, the leader of the Government, undertook the responsibility of directing what was equivalent to the very hazardous military manœuvre of changing his front in the presence of an active and sagacious enemy. No doubt he was obliged to strengthen his position, and under any circumstances his mode of doing so would be subject to criticism. He reconstructed his government, and the operation included, amongst other changes, not only the sending of his Irish forces to the rear, but of reducing them to the ranks, with the option, as it was amusingly made to appear, of being mustered out of the service. The transaction is of recent occurrence, and need not be dwelt upon. The surprise which it occasioned remains; for no very specific reasons have been given, so far as we are aware, for the course which was then pursued. That it was not taken upon the advice of the subject of our sketch, we have the best reason for thinking; for Mr. McGee took the earliest opportunity of showing, in the general election which followed, that he would not play pawn to Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's king. Rather than do so he crossed over to the enemy. The amenities of political elections is a work yet to be written; when it is written, the election for Montreal, in 1863, might, we incline to think, furnish some instructive as well as amusing passages. In the session which immediately followed, Mr. McGee, on three different occasions, and with evident and unalloyed satisfaction, recorded his vote of want of confidence in the re-constructed administration of his former chief. Thus had he fairly crossed the houses. He not only, and with a will, voted with the party which he had theretofore opposed, but on the late Sir E. P. Taché, in the month of March following, being called upon to form an administration, and a strong party administration too, he accepted the office of Minister of Agriculture, which he still continues to fill. People may be inclined to think, and not without some reason, that the subject of our sketch was moved in the course which he took, more by pique than by principle, and that a personal slight provoked his political defection. Without staying to discuss a question on which