

relations between Upper and Lower Canada. The Convention was attended by 570 delegates—men of position and influence, from all parts of Upper Canada—the whole subject was fully and freely discussed—and the following resolutions were adopted, with hardly a dissenting voice:—

“1. *Resolved*—That the existing Legislative Union of Upper and Lower Canada has failed to realize the anticipations of its promoters, has resulted in a heavy public debt, burdensome taxation, great political abuses, and universal dissatisfaction throughout Upper Canada; and it is the matured conviction of this assembly, from the antagonisms developed through difference of origin, local interests, and other causes, that the Union, in its present form, can no longer be continued with advantage to the people.”

“5. *Resolved*—That in the opinion of this assembly, the best practicable remedy for the evils now encountered in the government of Canada is to be found in the formation of two or more local governments, to which shall be committed the control of all matters of a local or sectional character, and some joint authority charged with such matters as are necessarily common to both sections of the Province.”

“6. *Resolved*—That while the details of the changes proposed in the last resolution are necessarily subject for future arrangement, yet this assembly deems it imperative to declare that no government would be satisfactory to the people of Upper Canada which is not based on the principle of Representation by Population.”

In the same year (1859) a meeting of the Lower Canada Liberal members of Parliament was held at Montreal, to “consider the political position of the country, and the duties thereby imposed on the Liberal party of Lower Canada.” At that meeting, a committee, consisting of Messrs. A. A. Dorion, T. D. McGee, L. T. Drummond, L. A. Dessaulles, was appointed to report upon the subject which brought the meeting together. At a subsequent meeting, that committee presented a report, recommending that a remedy for the sectional difficulties of the country should be found in the federative principle. Here are some of the extracts from it:—

“Your Committee are impressed with the conviction that whether we consider the present needs or the probable future condition of the country, the true, the statesman-like solution is to be sought in the substitution of a purely *Federative* for the present so-called *Legislative* Union; the former, it is believed, would enable us to escape all the evils, and to retain all the advantages, appertaining to the existing Union.”

“The proposition to federalize the Canadian Union is not new. On the contrary, it has been frequently mooted in Parliament and in the press, during the last few years. It was no doubt suggested by the example of the neighbouring States, where the admirable adaptation of the federal system to the government of an extensive territory, inhabited by people of diverse origins, creeds, laws and customs, has been amply demonstrated; but shape and consistency were first imparted to it in 1856, when it was formally submitted to Parliament by the Lower Canada Opposition, as offering, in their judgment, the true corrective of the abuses generated under the present system.”

“By this division of power, the General Government would be relieved from those questions of a purely local and sectional character, which, under our present system, have led to much strife and ill-will.”

“The Committee believe that it is clearly demonstrable that the direct cost of maintaining both the federal and local governments need not exceed that