

said very candidly, that he would rather carry it with his, then, present advisers, than with his previous Government. Of course I cannot say positively what influenced His Excellency to that preference. It may be that we had been too long in the saddle, and felt firmly fixed in our seats; it may be that we were too supercilious, and were not subservient enough to His Excellency's wishes. We had our failings, but one, and the paramount desire of our administration was, to serve the people's interests, and we never permitted any man to come between us and those interests, nor permitted any interference with what we considered constitutional principles; and when we in Council made a recommendation, we saw that it was carried into effect.

I know not what it is that His Excellency has seen in me to favor me especially with his confidence, unless it is that I have never sought after personal aggrandizement. For eleven years I have been in public life, and have never asked for or got anything for myself. My seat here was not asked for by me; I came here to meet the necessities of my party, and I have always retained the position in my own country, of being able to secure a seat if not in one branch of the Legislature, in the other, and therefore, when I hear charges made about hon. gentlemen seeking their own self interest it passes by me like the wind. But I have heard, and with astonishment and regret, grave charges made against hon. gentleman, my colleagues in this House; I have heard the motives of hon. members of this branch, whose years should shield them from such groundless slanders, impugned.

It is complained of His Excellency, that he held consultation with me. The Government knew I was in communication with His Excellency, for I met Mr. Smith at dinner at Government House, immediately after His Excellency's return from Montreal, three days before the House met; His Excellency told me he had been to Canada, in the interest of the Government, on the matter of union, and that Mr. Smith had agreed to go for a scheme of confederation, and he had advised to act in conjunction with gentlemen in the Opposition. Subsequently, he invited me to meet Mr. Smith, in order to see what could or should be done. I said I would endeavor to influence gentlemen of my party to co-operate with me, if satisfied about the proposed union, because I believed there was no man of that party, however strong his feelings might be as to the wrongs we had suffered, but was prepared to forget, in the great national interests of the moment, any mere feelings of desire for party preference or of party revenge. I can appeal to gentlemen who hear me to-day, to bear witness to the truth of what I as-

sert, when I say that my conduct created suspicion in the minds of those gentlemen with whom I had long been associated publicly; that I nearly abnegated myself with my party, and forfeited my claims upon their confidence, because I was resolved to help the dominant party to carry Confederation. Friends told me "Mitchell, you have destroyed, you have ruined our party," and left me in anger.

I felt that the Government, if sincere, were playing a dangerous game, and, at the same time, doubted their sincerity, because I did not think they discovered sufficient frankness, and I told His Excellency that I doubted the sincerity of the Government. He told me he had the most certain evidences of the sincerity of His advisers, and could pledge himself for them. I never doubted His Excellency; from what I had seen of him, I always considered him high-minded and honorable—Time, the revealer of all things, will show who are the men of truth. I gave my word to His Excellency, but added one condition to it, and it was, that on the first opportunity, the Government would come out boldly, and avow their policy. His Excellency entertained no doubt of this, because he told me he had written despatches, based on their promises, that they would, soon after the meeting of the House, submit the papers, and have a committee struck. Had the Government acted boldly, as they promised, and brought in a scheme, and honestly avowed their change of opinion, they would be now in a better position, and, having thus proved their sincerity, I would be bound to support them.

As I have said, I doubted them; I am inclined to doubt anything that shrinks from the light of day. For one week I kept my pledge, and then seeing no prospect of the Government keeping their pledges, I went to His Excellency and told him that I wished to recall my pledge. He asked me why. I told him why; I had reason to conclude that the Government intended to deceive us; that they had told their supporters that the paragraph in the Speech did not mean Confederation, although the papers in the sister Colonies were full of the intelligence that our Government had declared for confederation in the Speech, and although in those Colonies it was creating a change in public sentiment, and was calculated to lead to good results, though our Government did not intend it. His Excellency expressed regret at my convictions, and reluctantly surrendered to me my pledge.

The question, and it is an unpleasant