

ernment themselves will voluntarily make as soon as possible after the prorogation of this meeting of Parliament. I say this, notwithstanding that a leading paper, said to be inspired by an honorable gentleman opposite, pronounces it madness to make such a declaration. If there be one thing more than another which we admire in the British statesman it is that high sense of personal, party and political honor which governs all his actions. When Mr. Gladstone, leading a Government, supported by a large majority in Parliament, found election after election going against him. He naturally said to himself, "Although I may have a considerable majority at my back, and although I am in a position to hold on to place and power until the general election comes, yet, as a man and as a British statesman, I am bound in honor to ascertain whether I possess the confidence of the country." He appealed to the people of England, and we all know the result. Here, in Canada, where we are proud of our connection with the Empire, proud of all that is noble and grand in her institutions, her policy and her public men, we have precisely the same condition of things. We have a Government sustained in the House of Commons by a very considerable majority, and yet election after election is decided either against them or by such diminished majorities as to indicate as clearly as sunbeams that there is a decided change in the sentiment of the country, and I believe that this Government desirous of imitating the honorable example set them by Gladstone, will, as soon as possible, make an appeal to the country. Therefore, I say it would have been very desirable to have had in a concise and convenient form such a review of the past to lay before the people. I have not kept such a record, and I shall leave to those who have the materials on hand to prepare such a narrative as may be necessary and only content myself with a few general observations. Looking over the ten years that have passed we find in the events and circumstances of the country that it is naturally divided into two periods—seven years of plenty and three years, not exactly of famine, but three years, to borrow a phrase from a celebrated committee, of depression; seven years of plenty under the leadership of Sir John Macdonald, and three years of depression under the administration of the gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury Benches. Seven years of plenty it is difficult to find in the history of any country a like period of peace more fruitful in important events and more marked in

general progress. It may be considered a little out of place for a Nova Scotia representative—where we not only opposed this union, but predicted so many evils would accrue from it—to offer congratulations on this prosperity, which has been induced by skilful management. But although we gave opposition and prophesied many evils, most of which, under skilful guidance have been averted, so soon as union became an unalterable fact it was the duty of all to unite to promote the prosperity of our common country, and I am sure there is patriotism enough in Nova Scotia not to feel chagrined that our predictions were not realized, but on the contrary to rejoice, even though we had not the lesson of Jonah's Gourd at the unexampled prosperity of that period. Going back to 1867, we find that four Provinces were suddenly brought together possessing largely elements of antagonism. The two larger differed in the origin of their people, their language, laws, religion and pursuits. The others differ less widely in these respects, perhaps, but were separated by long distance, and they had different laws, different currencies, different interests. To bring these into one harmonious whole was a task that might well have appalled the stoutest heart. And rarely, if ever, has a Government been formed with a greater work to make or mar, or which required more enlarged and liberal statesmanship than that formed under Sir John Macdonald's leadership. Had he, on many occasions, adopted plans not the wisest and best, we could well have attributed it to the enormous mass of work to be performed in a limited time. But the whole country must bear testimony to the great general success attending his leadership. Early in his work attention was turned to the stream of British Americans passing into the United States. The census showed that nearly half a million of our people had, in a comparatively short period, moved there to multiply and increase to millions, and in all time to help build up that foreign country. An examination of the returns showed that a very large proportion of those who crossed the line settled in the prairie States, and accordingly, so soon as possible, the great Northwest was secured and opened up for settlement, and the stream diverted to a prairie land, under our own flag, sufficient to give a home to millions. It will be borne in mind that in 1867 the Provinces, except Nova Scotia, were without a defensive organisation. This want was met, and met successfully, as the Fenians found on two occasions. British Columbia was added, and then Prince Edward Island,