

erotic policy of our weak-kneed Anti-Confederate brethren of these Colonies.

The "existing Canadian Constitution" has been subjected of late to very severe tests. The "theory of Colonial self-Government," as laid down in the Union Act of 1840, was, according to Mr. Penny, merely "an enabling theory." The framework of the Legislative machinery by which these Provinces have been governed for 27 years, was theoretically formed at that time, but practice has given solidity to the system under which we have lived for those years, and in virtue of which we now possess our liberties under the British Constitution. The "entire disposal of our own destinies" has been confided to us by the most liberal Government in the world, and we have happily known how to appreciate such privileges. The "tie of allegiance" is in a perfect state of preservation, and that "self-government in the broadest sense," to which Mr. Penny alludes, has been successfully practised even with respect to the proposed Confederation of these Provinces. But there is a serious grievance in the shape of a certain line of proceeding adopted by the Home Government; and Mr. Penny lays great stress upon the modification of the "two-thirds vote clause" of the Union Act. This condition was modified to please the Liberal party of Canada, who had continuously, even since the date of the celebrated 92 resolutions, clamored for an Elective Legislative Council with forcible persistency. That beau-ideal of an Elective Council was the result of these endeavors. Has it succeeded as a check upon the hasty legislation of the people? It has been admitted by all political parties that the experiment has resulted in abject failure.

Still we find that the *absurd plan* of voting themselves out of political existence has received the sanction of the large majority of legislative councillors elected under this very modification of the Union Act of 1840. The amendment was sanctioned in order to carry out old reform views. Why then should an old and devoted reformer condemn its operation?

The trip of our ministers to Charlottetown is visited with Mr. Penny's severe censure. Delegates from the Maritime Provinces had assembled in that obscure locality to attempt a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces. Our ministers, feeling that an opportunity presented itself for the larger political Union, acting under the informal authority of Her Ma-

esty's representative, repaired thither, and the ultimate consequence was the meeting in Quebec, at which the scheme of the Conference was adopted. Of course it will not be denied, even by Mr. Penny, that the latter meeting was authoritatively summoned by His Excellency Lord Monck, Governor General of the Provinces interested.

These are matters of detail well known to all who have followed Confederation in its several stages. The Conference in Quebec was secret, the leading statesmen of the six Provinces were present, and every point raised was discussed with marked ability. If a Federal Union rather than a Legislative Union was adopted, it was simply because Lower Canada institutions, as represented in the Conference, offered serious objections from a French Canadian national standpoint.

We have already stated the difficulties which surrounded the organization of the "*immoral combination*," as Mr. Penny terms it; we now venture a challenge. Will Mr. Penny or one of his political friends consent to face a Lower Canadian French constituency as an advocate of a *Legislative* instead of a *Federal* Union? He knows quite as well as the writer of these lines feels certain, that he or his friend would be routed "horse, foot and artillery." Why then persist in detracting from the merits of the only practicable solution of a very difficult problem?

As for the suggested "impeachment of the Ministry" for introducing the new Constitution to Parliament, we again hope that the members of that body will not feel alarmed. When a certain number of statesmen are summoned by Imperial authority to meet on a Constitutional errand, when they perform their duty, and stand or fall before the representatives of the people in Parliament on their policy, we claim for them absolution from impeachment. A parliamentary minority may attack them, but if a majority should protect and applaud them—their position is invulnerable. Such is the proud position now held by the Ministry of Canada.

There is no attempt "to make a Kingdom a Republic"—to establish "Imperial Despotism"—to create an "Elective Monarchy"; but a mere quiet, and forcibly expressed desire to consolidate British Rule on this continent, and checkmate the modest moves of that annexation party in these Provinces, the members of which have not the courage openly to avow their opinions.