

SPEECHES

OF THE HON.

MESSRS. HOWLAND & McDOUGALL,

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE TORONTO CONVENTION,

ON

JUNE 27TH, 1867.

Hon. Mr. HOWLAND said—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I was called upon this evening by a gentleman who said he had been deputed to ask me and my colleague Mr. Macdougall to attend this meeting to-night, in accordance with what I was informed was the unanimous desire of the convention. I am very much indebted to you, sir, and the convention for paying me that compliment at which any man might feel gratified. I acknowledge the respectability of this assemblage, the intelligence, the wealth and influence of the men who are gathered here to-night, and I acknowledge also the importance to be attached to any decision to which you may after due deliberation come. (Hear, hear, cheers.) But, sir, while I admit all that, as a member of the government of this country I have a responsibility resting upon of which, it is true, I shall be very soon relieved, but while I occupy

that position I am bound in honour to regard that responsibility, and therefore cannot perhaps speak with the same freedom as other gentlemen who may rise to address this meeting. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Chairman, I may at the outset say that I cordially concur with the resolutions that have been passed up to the present time by this meeting. (Hear, hear, and ironical cheers.) Yes, I repeat that I cordially agree with those resolutions. I think, sir, that I as much as any man in this assemblage may rejoice that those principles for which the reform party have contended are at length about to be put into operation. (Hear, hear.) I claim to have acted with the reform party in the contest for those principles as long as any man I see here. My hair now is getting grey, but from my youth I have ever advocated the doctrines of the reform party; and from the very first occasion on which I

felt it my duty to pay attention to the public affairs of this country, I have been convinced that the views of the reform party were those which were best adapted to secure the peace, good government and prosperity of this country. (Hear, hear.) I have always had a strong conviction that a large majority of that party have been actuated by honest motives and with the highest desire to carry out such principles and measures as were for the good of the whole country. Believing that, I threw in my lot with them and worked in my humble way earnestly and faithfully for the success of the party, and I venture also to say honestly, for I never heard a person whose opinion I respected charge me with having done otherwise. (Cheers.) I have made great sacrifice on behalf of the party—personal and other sacrifices, although they were no more than I was entitled to make in return for the honour which was conferred upon me in sending me to parliament. I felt it my duty to make those sacrifices and to lend my aid and assistance in any position where it might be considered that I could be of benefit to the cause. (Hear, hear.) Acting upon those views, sir, I was called upon ten years ago and asked to represent a portion of the people of this country in the parliament of the province. I responded to that call and a few days before the election. I was chosen to assume the position of a candidate of the reform party. At that time the party had a hard battle to obtain changes in the constitution under which the government was established. I thought sincerely that those changes were necessary and general principles laid down by my honourable friend Mr. Brown, the leader of the party received my cordial approval. I acted cordially with him in getting the adoption of those principles in the constitution of the country, and I had the honour to

share in the exertions made to attain the objects we had in view in common with my fellow members representing the reform party of the country in Parliament. (Hear, hear.) And here, sir, I agree with the resolution just read, and bear testimony to the truth that those men who represented the reform party in contending for those changes are entitled to the thanks, the respect and the gratitude of the people of this country—(cheers)—and I will always accord thanks and gratitude to them, whatever position I may take in the future, whether we are acting together as before or separately. However that may be, sir, I shall ever bear testimony to the steadfastness with which they performed that duty. We had a hard struggle in the advocacy of those changes. In 1858 we succeeded in passing a vote which was regarded as a defeat by the government of the day. The result of that you all know. In 1862 we again defeated the government of the day. My honourable friend, Mr. Brown, was not at that time in Parliament, and I was asked by the gentleman whom the Governor General, in the exercise of his prerogative, thought proper to call upon to form a new government to join him in a government formed purely upon reform principles and of members of the reform party. I felt it my duty to respond to that call. I entered that government, and I beg to say on behalf of all the members of it that there never was a set of men got together who had more earnestly at heart the good of the Provinces or who had more singleness of purpose in labouring to apply a remedy for the evils that had grown up in the government and institutions of the country. But unfortunately we were not sustained, although during the short period of our existence we initiated and carried out what, in my opinion, were measures

of great benefit to the people of this country. (Hear, hear.) Our power of doing good was, however, brought to an end, and you all know the contest that arose. You all know the narrow majority which each government had in turn, and you know also the result which was finally brought about and which has been so freely discussed here to-night, that is the coalition of 1864. Now, sir, I come to the point in these resolutions which is of the greatest interest to myself and my colleagues, and perhaps it may be proper for me to direct attention to my share in that coalition and my views with regard to governments formed in that manner. In the first place, the "coalition" of itself does not, I think, carry with it anything that would warrant condemnation. (Hear, hear, ironical cheers and laughter.) You may not accept this statement, but I assert most positively that the coalition which was formed in 1864 was free from all immoral and improper motives, was for the good of the country and was a coalition the object of which was a full justification of those gentlemen who went into it. (Hear, hear.) Well, then, my definition of a coalition is this: If you have a government in existence with an organized opposition; if you have separate and distinct issues before the country in which two parties are involved, upon opposite sides; if you have one party arrayed against another party; and if the views of either party, carried out into law, would affect the right and interests of the people or a larger portion of the people of the country;—if, I say, under those circumstances a portion of one party holding opposite views to the other party should go over to that party and enable it to carry its principles and measures into effect, then such a coalition would be improper and immoral. (Cheers, hisses and some confusion.) Now, sir, what were the

facts in 1864? We had been contending that certain changes were necessary for the welfare and good government of this country. The party opposed to us, the conservatives, had opposed that view; but at a certain time they came to say, "It is necessary and right that we should modify our views; we acknowledge that a majority of the people of this country are determined that there shall be a change in the constitution of the government, and we believe it is our duty to go in with you and consider what that change should be;" and in the consultations which followed it was agreed that that change should be either the confederation of the whole provinces of British North America or the federation of Upper and Lower Canada. Now, there was nothing improper in that on the part of either party, because it is true that they judged rightly and were acting in accordance with the desire of the whole people of this country. I may say that as far as Upper Canada is concerned there never was any real opposition to the coalition—I mean any organized, effective opposition. I believe there were three or four members from this section of the country opposed to confederation, but there never was anything entitled to be called an active opposition to it. Therefore those who entered the coalition judged rightly. They were acting in accordance with the opinion of the people of Upper Canada, and were therefore doing their duty. (Hear, hear.) I quite agree, sir, with the statements that have been made here to-night that the object for which that coalition was created, the conditions upon which it was formed, the authority given by the people through their representatives sanctioning its formation—that the whole of that will come to an end on the 1st day of July next. (Loud cheers.) Yes, I mean to say that the position of every public

man in this country, of every member of Parliament, of every other man holding public office or appointment, except those mentioned in the Imperial act, who have appointments during life—that is, the administrative officers of the government—I say that the position and authority of these public men and officers will terminate on the 1st of July. (Hear, hear.) Then we at once step into a new position, and that position is one that brings with it something that, I think, is a matter to be greatly rejoiced over. It brings into one body, into one united people, the four large Provinces composing what is termed British North America. Now, in future, in anything we may do, in any step we may take, we have to consider our position in reference to the people of the whole of these provinces. If we were here to-night with a view to decide the course we should pursue with regard to the local government of Upper Canada, that is a question of our own over which we have sole control. But when we take a step that is to decide upon the government of the whole of this confederacy, then we are bound to take the opinion not alone of a party in one section of the confederacy, but of the people of the sister provinces as well who form a part of that confederacy. (Cheers and hisses.) Now, sir, I may state to you that until within a few days neither I nor my colleagues were in a position to say to our friends in the country—for the reason that we did not know and had no right to know—what the state of things would be on the formation of the government—what government would be formed, or who would be called upon to form it. You all know that the selection and appointment of a gentlemen to form a government is a prerogative that exists in the Crown, over which none of us have control. In the exercise of that prerogative his Excellency the Governor-General has thought fit to call upon Mr. J. A. Mac-

donald to form a new government for the Dominion, to inaugurate the machinery for carrying into effect this system of government which we have at length obtained. Charged with that duty Mr. Macdonald says to my colleagues and myself—“ We have here a new system of government, and we have authority to put it into operation. Now I think it in the interest of the country that in the formation of a government to carry that system into effect, as we are now in an entirely new position, and as we all agree upon the principles of the government that has been established by the imperial authority we should still continue to act together. And although there may have been differences of opinion as to some points in the new system”—and I myself (continued Mr. Howland) may say that there are some portions of it which if I had the framing of it I would have desired to have changed; and one of those points, which has been alluded to by speakers here to-night, is the constitution of the upper House. (Cheers.) In my humble opinion the mode in which the upper House is constituted, the appointment of its members for life by the Crown, is not in accordance with the principles upon which the whole fabric is built—(renewed cheering)—but it was found impossible to obtain the system on any other basis, and I have very little doubt it may work for a time favourably. At all events, we cannot be seriously injured by trying it; and there is not the least doubt, from the evidence I have seen of the desire on the part of the people and of both political parties in England to accord us anything which we may think for our good, that if at some future time we should desire to have a change in the constitution of the Senate, it will be freely granted to us. (Cheers.) I was going on to say, sir, that Mr. Macdonald proposed to start the machinery of the new gov-

ernment upon this principle: he says—
 “I desire to bring to my aid, without respect to parties in the past, gentlemen who are in the present government who were active in bringing about the new form of government—who used their influence to that end in the different sections of the confederacy. I desire to bring to my aid in the new government those men, irrespective of party, who represent their majorities in the different Provinces of the Union. I do not want it to be felt by any section in the country that they have no representative in the cabinet and no influence in the government. And as there are now no issues to divide parties, and as all that is required is to have in the government the men who are best adapted to put the new machinery in motion, I desire to ask those to join me who have the confidence and represent the majorities in the various sections of those who were in favour of the adoption of this system of government and who wish to see it satisfactorily carried out.” (Ironical cheers and counter cheers.) Mr. Macdonald, with this object in view, called to this council, gentlemen from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick who had throughout given their warmest support to the new system—men who like ourselves are reformers, who in days gone by fought and battled for responsible government, men who have contended for the same principles that the reform party in western Canada has contended for, men of the greatest talent and of the highest character, and men who are respected for their ability and known position in the country. (Cheers.) Those men he called from their respective provinces and asked to join him in forming a government which should put the machinery of confederation in motion. Well, sir, upon consultation with these gentlemen—but perhaps I should first say that up to this period myself and my

colleagues were perfectly free to take any course we chose, for we had never committed ourselves in any way whatever. We had not put ourselves in a position of saying we would not join the new government, nor had we committed ourselves to anything binding us to enter into it. We were, as I have said, perfectly free to act as to us might seem proper, and to take any course we pleased without rendering ourselves liable to a charge of unfairness to Mr. Macdonald or his colleagues. Well, then, we considered it our duty above all things to look to the position of the whole of the provinces and to the effects that might be produced throughout the entire country by any arrangement that might take place in the formation of the government; and upon consultation with those gentlemen who had come from the lower provinces they declared themselves in this way to us:—“At your instance,” they said in effect, “we joined you in advocating the scheme of union, and we did so with the determination to stake our whole position as public men upon the question. We agreed to join you in carrying this into effect. Unfortunately, we have had a much harder battle to fight than you have had. A larger proportion of our people, especially in Nova Scotia, was opposed to confederation, and in New Brunswick in the first place there was a majority against it.” These gentlemen at the outset were told by us, were told by Mr. Brown himself, that it was their paramount duty to support the proposed union above all other questions, and that if they stood by us we would stand by them. (Hear, hear.) They were told to forget past party differences with the object to secure this great change, that their local politics sank into insignificance in comparison with it, and they were asked as patriotic men, irrespective of former party lines to set aside all past

differences and unite with us to fight out this battle to a successful close. Those gentlemen, thus strongly appealed to, decided that it was their duty in the interest of the whole country to act as they were entreated to do. They at once followed the patriotic course pointed out to them, and in New Brunswick we find Mr. Tilley who has been a reformer all his life, declaring that "any man who is in favour of Union and Confederation is in favour of me, and any man who is opposed to Union and Confederation—let him be reformer or conservative or what-not—is opposed to me. (Cheers.) I can only recognize as belonging to my party those who sustain me in carrying out this great measure." Our friends of Nova Scotia, Mr. Archibald, Mr. McCully and other reformers of high standing separated themselves from a portion of their party and took the same course. (Hear, hear.) Well, gentlemen, they have had a hard fight and their fight is not yet over. They did succeed in carrying confederation by a large majority in Nova Scotia—not the whole scheme in its entirety, but a resolution authorizing delegates to go to England to arrange terms of union. Well, these gentlemen from New Brunswick, after coming to this country to consult upon the formation of a government, told us who represent the reform party of Upper Canada that, "occupying the position we do, we cannot go back to our people and say that because Mr. Macdonald is a conservative we decline to go into the government with him. If we did we would be doing wrong and an injustice to those conservatives who supported us in the struggle for confederation." If it had so happened that my honourable friend Mr. Brown had been called upon to form the first government of the union and had invited them to join him they would have said in the same

way—"It is our duty to join Mr. Brown, for we who are from Nova Scotia cannot return and say to our constituents who supported confederation, some of whom are conservatives and some reformers, that because Mr. Brown is a reformer we cannot go into a cabinet with him, for thereby we would be putting a slight upon our reform supporters." That, sir, is the position they take, and they say that, no matter who may be called upon to form it, they must go into the first government which is created to inaugurate a system upon which they staked their political character and prospects. (Cheers.) Then, Mr. Macdonald says—"I propose in the first place to acknowledge numbers in the formation of the government, and although it is desirable to avoid laying down the principle of a proportionate representation in the cabinet when the number was small, yet I propose to recognize the wealth and influence of Upper Canada by giving it a preponderance of five members. (Cheers and counter cheers.) Then, to Lower Canada I will accord four members, and to the lower Provinces four more." Mr. Macdonald further says—"I am prepared to call to my councils the three gentlemen representing the Reform element of Upper Canada. (Cheers, hisses and confusion.) I propose also to call for gentlemen from the lower Provinces who belong to the reform party in these Provinces."

A VOICE—Who are those reformers?

MR. BROWN—Surely you do not call Mr. Kenney, of Nova Scotia, a reformer.

MR. HOWLAND—Mr. Kenney was a reformer. (Applause and ironical cheers.) He was placed at the head of Executive Council of Nova Scotia by Mr. Howe, the leader of the reform party at the time, but some difference arose which isolated the Catholic population from the reform ranks, and Mr. Kenney for two or three years past has been acting with the con-

servatives under Dr. Tupper. He is a gentleman of the highest character and wealth in Nova Scotia, and until a comparatively recent period has been a prominent reformer. At any rate the proposition made by Mr. Macdonald was in effect that there should be in his cabinet at least six gentlemen who have been known all their lives as reformers, who have always acted with their party and have always held reform views, together with Mr. Kenney, who has always been in harmony with those views, except upon the occasion when a religious question arose to alienate him. Now then, sir, these gentlemen having agreed to accept positions in the new government, it was for us to decide upon our course. The responsibility rested upon us to say whether we would acquiesce in that arrangement which had been made with a view to put the new governmental system into fair working order, or whether it was our duty to say no. (Hear, hear.) The question for us to decide was whether it was our duty or not to say "No; we think it most desirable for the reform party of Upper Canada to stand out by ourselves and not join you in any way in the government, upon any basis or in any position, or to accept any terms that you may promise." Now, sir, my own conviction is that having acted with you, and having acted in good faith, and having a firm conviction that we as reformers had good cause to ask for a change in the constitution of this country, we should now feel that we have obtained the full benefits of that change to which we have long looked forward—(hear, hear)—but I feel too that, whether regarded from the standpoint of statesmanship, or as a question of party tactics, there could not be a more ruinous thing for us to do than for the great reform party of Upper Canada to preclude these representing us from uniting with men, no matter where they

may come from, who have worked earnestly to bring about the change. (Ironical cheers and applause.) Why, sir, what will be the result if we refuse to do this? We will coalesce with those who have been the enemies of our friends in the Lower Provinces, with those who have strenuously opposed the union throughout, with those prominent among whom is one who has said that if it had not been for the oath he had taken to Her Majesty he would be among the first to shoulder his rifle and march to the border to shed his blood in opposition to Confederation. (Cheers.) I think myself that if we the reformers of Upper Canada should do that—should unite ourselves against those who have stood by us through all this struggle—we would be guilty of a most dishonourable act. (Cheers.) Are we going to say to these men from the Lower Provinces—"Although we acknowledge you to hold principles like our own, to be men of the highest character, men with whom we have been led to hope we would some day be associated, although we acknowledge you to be the sterling men we thought you were, although we induce you to stand to the front in this battle which we have fought—although we acknowledge all this, yet now, when we have got you into this position into which we have pushed you, while you have risked your standing as public men in the cause which was our cause as well as yours, we the reform party of western Canada, because there are men we object to among those with whom you are associated, are going to turn round and join your enemies, and sweep you out of existence as a reward for the great services you have rendered." (Loud cheering, hisses and confusion.) I do not think, sir, that the sense of right, that the sense of justice of this assemblage, intelligent and respectable as it is, would

approve such a course as that, well-knowing as I do that when they who are here assembled fairly consider the question they will have only one object, viz, to pursue such a course as is just with whom they are dealing and as will tend to the peace, welfare and good government of this country. (Cheers.) I do not think that if so considered they would call upon their representatives to pursue a course so unwise and so unjust as that would be. We must not forget that in the discussion which has been going on to-night a point of view from which we have been called to look upon this question is an Upper Canada point of view. (Cheers and cries of "no, no.") I say we must take a broader view of it than that; we must see what is our duty to our fellow-colonies who are coming in with us, and we must look to the results upon the whole, and not upon a part, of the community. Is it wise, sir, to form a party before there are any issues to go upon? (Cheers and counter cheers.) Undoubtedly there will be parties, but at the start there is no political question to divide opinion, but merely a question of men. When you are called upon to elect your representatives, elect decidedly the best men—honest men, who will act independently upon their own judgment. When they were assembled together, and the policy and acts of the government are submitted to them, questions may arise upon which they may differ, and possibly two questions may arrive which will prevent us from acting together. But, before such questions arise, to say merely because certain men in the government have been opposed to reform—although there is a majority of the government independent of those men—we will form a coalition in effect with those who were opposed to confederation, with men who will do all in their power to thwart it, who fought it, and are still fighting it—

I say that to join hands with those men, and thereby throw power into the hands of the conservative party of Canada, we would be placing ourselves in the same position as we were in before, unrepresented in the cabinet, and having no control over the policy of the government. (Cheers and counter cheers.) I say it would be most unwise to act in that manner, and, acting upon my judgment, I have decided upon my course. (Cheers.) In following that course honestly and to the best of my ability, I shall depend upon your forbearance. I believe you have come here to consider and act for the best, and if you differ from me I shall at any rate respect your opinion. I should be sorry if any estrangement should arise which should prevent us acting again together upon any question that might come up, involving a principle of the reform party. I do not think there is any necessity for such an estrangement. I think it is not for the reform party to say that we cannot be satisfied with anything—that when we get what we want, we must again begin to agitate. (Cheers and hisses.) It is a question of very great moment that we are now called upon to consider. The eyes of the world are upon us, for this Confederation which you are now about to carry into effect is attracting the attention of the world. In England they are looking with the greatest possible interest to the course we may take. Do not then, before anything is done, before any political question arises, begin again the work of agitation in the country, and thus let it be believed abroad that we are not satisfied with our condition—that there is something which we want, that we are unsettled in our desires, and that we can never be content unless we have something to agitate. (Cheers and counter cheers.) I have come here unprepared to make a statement, and I have given the facts as briefly as I could. I do not pro-

fess to be an orator, nor do I make any pretensions to that character. I have stated to you simply the course I have taken, and that course I believe to be right. (Loud clapping of hands and ironical cheers.)

A DELEGATE—Do you acknowledge the opinions of this assemblage to be a fair representation of the opinions of the reformers of Upper Canada?

Mr. HOWLAND—It would be impossible for me to answer that question. I acknowledge the intelligence and respectability of this meeting, but I have not seen the lists of those who are assembled here nor do I know the character of those whom they represent. I have not the least doubt that the gentlemen who are here are reformers, but I do not know whether their position is national and representative or not. I acknowledge of course their right to express their opinion if they please, but how far they represent the reform party of Upper Canada I have no facts to show. (Cheers.)

Hon. Mr. MACDOUGALL then rose to address the meeting. He was received with cheering by a considerable number, followed by hissing and other offensive sounds by the rest of the assemblage.

A DELEGATE said that this assemblage was not treating Mr. Macdougall right, nor showing him the respect due to a minister of the crown. He did not believe in condemning a man before he was heard. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN trusted the gentleman who had last spoken would approach to the platform, in accordance with a resolution which had been passed requiring speakers to address the meeting from the platform. With regard to Mr. Macdougall, having invited him to be present, and when he appeared in response to that invitation, they were bound to hear patiently what he had to say. It would certainly be very dis-

creditable to act otherwise. [(Hear, hear.)

Mr. MACDOUGALL, who, during this scene remained quietly on his feet, said: I am too old a politician, sir, to be at all disturbed or disconcerted by hisses, limited—I am glad to say, to but a very small number of persons in this assemblage. I have been invited here by a gentleman who stated to my honorable colleague and myself that he was deputed by this respectable assemblage—respectable in point of numbers and in the appearance of its members, and, as far as I can judge, a fair representation of the great reform party—that gentleman stated to me that we were invited by the unanimous resolution of the convention to be present here this evening. (Cheers, and cries of "No.")

The CHAIRMAN said the resolution was that tickets should be sent to the two reform members of the government in town, which resolution was proposed on the ground that invitations had not been sent to them.

Mr. MACDOUGALL—I am only sorry then that this convention was misrepresented by its delegate, and that the fraud should have been practised to induce my colleague and myself to come here on such terms. (Cheers.) We were not led to suppose that we were invited simply as spectators by having cards of admission sent to us, for that were a small compliment when there are plenty of people here who have the same privilege. We are not members of this convention, we are not in this part of the country for the purpose of taking part in its proceedings. We shall see your resolves and that perhaps is all it will be our duty or our right to know of the matter. But we supposed it was the desire of the majority of the meeting—the gentleman who waited upon us said it was the unanimous desire—to hear some statement from us of our position as public men and as, till a recent period at all events, humble members of the reform

party—some explanations of the course we have taken and of the reasons of the course we intend to take. Sir, if I mistake my position here, I have nothing more to say; but if the convention desire to hear what I have to say I will with pleasure go on. (Cheers and cries of “go on.”) Now, sir, the history of the reform party, I am quite safe in saying, shows that we are not as a party altogether unanimous. I see by the speeches that have been delivered to-night that you are not unanimous even here on some questions. The history of our party shows that there have been times when gentlemen occupying a prominent position in the legislature and of the press of the country have, acting upon their own responsibility, taken a course which has not met the approval of other gentlemen holding an equally prominent position in the party. Mr. Brown, who is an able man and conducts a powerful press, has in times past denounced public men—some of whom I see in this hall and some in the gallery—trying to secure their defeat at one time and at other times supporting them, sometimes upon one issue and at other times upon another and different issue. (Hear, hear.) I suppose that the majority of this meeting will admit that when he was acting thus inconsistently, when he was found supporting conservative candidates at the polls in preference to reformers, he was acting honestly and according to his convictions, and that he believed what he was doing was for the interest of the country. I admit that; but his opinions on those occasions did not agree with mine nor with the opinions of many other members of the party. Now we have come, I think, come to a position in which a question of the greatest gravity is presented to the reform party of Western Canada. Sir, I do not claim that unbounded applause which the honorable gentleman, Mr. Brown, asks of you and

the people of the country for the success of the cause which he says you have come here to-day to celebrate. I have taken it is true, a very humble part in that work and at the same time I claim to have done what I did with zeal, integrity and an earnest intention to secure for my country a constitution the working of which would relieve us from the difficulties under which we have labored for many years. I claim to have had a desire to—and I believe it will be accomplished—given to Upper Canada, not to the reform party only, its rights. The reform party as a party has never been denied its rights. (Ironical cheers and cries of “no.”) I say that as a party it had its rights—it had to struggle at the polls and labour to succeed by convincing people that its principles and policy were right—but Upper Canada as a whole, conservatives and reform, has been denied its rights. Under the constitution, and the mode in which it worked, we have not had that influence in the government and we have not had those laws to which, in the opinion of our people, we were justly entitled. But the constitution which has just been conceded to us by the Imperial Parliament will, we believe, if fairly carried out, give us that position and influence in the affairs of British North America and in the government of these provinces to which we were entitled by our numbers, our intelligence and our wealth. (Cheers.) Now, gentlemen, I am something of a practical politician and I know that you have met here for a practical purpose. I have been connected with the press for many years, and know how these are arranged and conducted, and I see that there is a very large number in this assemblage, probably a majority who have come here with their minds made up to pursue a particular course and to affirm particular proposition. I am unwilling as a member of the reform party to pin my political faith upon the decision of this or

to any other political body. I believe that the principles I have advocated in the past and intend to advocate in the future, are principles which will commend themselves to the judgment of the reformers of Upper Canada. I am willing at the proper time to carry that opinion to the polls, where it will be decided in the only legitimate way in which their judgment can be expressed. I do not object to the mode in which you have assembled here; but I apprehend that it cannot be said that every reform constituency in the country is fairly and proportionately represented here, and I apprehend that the question as to the policy adopted by my colleagues and myself will be decided by a different body from that which is assembled before us tonight. (Cheers.) Now, as you sent for us to give you information, I have only to say that we are prepared to deny the resolution which is now in your hands. (Cheers and counter-cheers.) We deny that coalitions are immoral, or that they are fairly open to the other charges that are made against them in that resolution. We are prepared to assert that a coalition of the political parties of this country was absolutely necessary for the purpose of securing to the people the greatest boon that has ever been conferred upon the country, for without coalition you would never have had that constitution which will come into operation on the 1st of July. I was proud, as one of the humble architects of that constitution, to hear the eulogiums passed upon it, and upon Mr. Brown, by this assemblage, and I agree with you there. But when you go further and say in your resolutions that a coalition is a most immoral combination, you pronounce upon your friend Mr. Brown the greatest condemnation ever passed upon any man. (Cheers.) It was he of all others who gave us this coalition which framed the constitution which is so soon to come into effect. At the time when the Government was defeated, prior to the formation of the coal-

tion, I, as an humble member of the Reform party, was invited to go into the cabinet, with two friends from the Reform party. It was then proposed that there should be a coalition. One party had tried to carry on the government and had failed, and the other party had also tried and failed. There was, in fact, as had been said, a dead lock in the legislature. The general elections were just over, and it was said that there was no object in appealing again to the country, for neither party could say that another election would materially change the position. An appeal was then made to moderate men on both sides of the house to join together to prevent this dead-lock in the legislative affairs of the Province. I said to Sir Etienne Tache, the Premier, that I believed a coalition was the only possible release from the difficulty, but I added, "If you ask me to join you you must make it a real coalition—you must allow the liberals from Lower Canada to join you in the government, and if that be done, and good measures are proposed, I shall be happy to enter into such a government." Sir Etienne Tache told me that in Lower Canada his party were in a majority, that the *rouges* were demagogues, annexationists, infidels, and what not, that it was in Upper Canada the difficulty existed, and there it was that a coalition was necessary. Well, sir, although that proposition was very flattering to me, a young member of the party, who had not been long in Parliament, I felt it my duty to decline the offer. I refused to enter the government, but what did we find immediately afterwards? We found in a few days our friend Mr. Brown, who had voted against the government, coming down to the house and declaring that he was ready to enter into a Coalition with those gentlemen—(cheers)—or to support such a government as had just been condemned by the House. That declaration, you must well remember, took the whole country by

surprise, and I have no doubt that if a convention had then been called to pass upon his conduct, nine out of every ten reformers would have condemned it. (Hear, hear.) But the object to be accomplished was considered by your representatives to be one of such importance that an agreement was come to, and three members of the reform party, were asked to join the administration for the purpose of proposing a scheme for the confederation of the British North American Provinces. I went into that government, at the request of my party, as one of Mr. Brown's colleagues. I labored till the measure was passed, as diligently and as earnestly as it was in my power to do for the purpose of securing a constitution as satisfactory to the people of Upper Canada and of all the provinces as could be accomplished. In the midst of our career—before this measure was safe in this country as far as the maritime Provinces were concerned, and while I was absent in England on a mission important to the trade of this country—I heard to my astonishment that my colleague Mr. Brown, had decided to leave the government.

A DELEGATE—Quite right.

Mr. MACDOUGAL—Well, sir, all of us thought it was not quite right, and we thought that a majority of us in parliament found it was not quite right. We remained in the government. We decided that if Mr. Brown thought proper to leave the ship in mid-ocean and go ashore in a jolly-boat—(laughter and cheers)—because a storm appeared imminent, we would stick to the ship and endeavor to navigate it safely and carry its cargo into a good harbor. (Cheers.) I believe that in doing so we had the confidence and support of the great majority of those with whom we had been in the habit of acting, and whose good opinion we were anxious to preserve. Well, while in England, we discovered by the *Globe* newspaper that it was the opinion of Mr. Brown that

the liberal members of the government ought to leave it as soon as the measure of Confederation was carried in the Imperial Parliament—that we should send in our resignation as soon as our feet should again touch the Canadian shore. Sir, we thought it our duty not to follow that advice. We knew that there were several important matters to be attended to by the government of this Province before the union should take place. There was, for instance, the important matter of the constitution of the Upper House, and we thought it our duty to remain at our posts in order to see that in that branch of the new legislature a fair representation should be given to the reform party of Upper Canada. We found that it was proposed to appoint Senators in the same proportion politically as parties now bear towards each other in the House. It so happened that at that time the conservatives were from various causes very nearly in the proportion of two to one in the Legislative Council, or that they had at all events a great preponderance, which if carried out in the new body would give them fourteen senators, and the reformers ten, from Upper Canada. Now, I ask you what would be your position with a Senate composed largely of conservatives, and those appointed for life, with no power in the constitution to overcome their preponderance, or to amend the constitution of that House? (Hear, hear.) These were the principles that had been formed, and these were the principles which we took with us to England. But we felt that it was not a fair mode of selection nor a just interpretation of the intention of the Legislature, although Mr. Brown remarked when Mr. Howland entered the government, that there would be no difficulty, but that the selection was to be made on equal terms, and from that circumstance it was argued that the appointments to the Senate would be made on the principles of equality.

Mr. BROWN (interrupting) said the honorable gentleman was mistaken. He forgot that it was only last session that he (Mr. Brown) brought the Attorney General to book, and asked him whether or not it had been agreed in 1864 that the Attorney General should consult his friends, and he (Brown) his, and that in that way they should each choose one member of the Upper House, until the whole twenty-four were selected. The Attorney General stated that that was the bargain, and to say that it could have been changed in England was utterly impossible.

Mr. MACDOUGALL—All I can state—and I am stating a fact publicly which can be explained or established—is that that was not the opinion which the Governor General formed of the resolutions, and was not the opinion expressed by the Attorney General when we came to make the selections. But sir by transferring that question [from England to this country, by insisting with our colleagues that that was a fair and honest mode of selection, we succeeded in obtaining one-half of the Upper Canadian portion of the Senate for the liberal party, the other half going to the conservatives. I mention this fact not so much because of its own importance as to show that the advice which the honorable gentleman feels it his duty sometimes to give is not always right in view of other questions which may arise. (Cheers.) Till this and other important matters were settled we felt it to be our duty to remain in the government; and I point to the conduct of this coalition from the time Mr Brown joined it till now and I defy him, and I defy the writers of this country, to point to any acts of the government since he left it more unworthy or more deserving of censure than in the other half of its existence before he retired from it. (Hear, hear.) Now let me say that when the responsible duty was cast upon us of consenting or refusing to enter the

administration about to be formed, we felt it incumbent upon us to look at the question not only from a party and an Upper Canadian point of view, but from a British American point of view. (Cheers.) The prerogative of the Crown was exercised, and Mr. John A. Macdonald, who was President of the Conference in London was authorized by the Governor General to form a government under the new constitution. He had that power in his hands—he had authority to form a government, and he had the ability to do it. He came to his colleagues and made this proposition: The policy we shall adopt will be acceptable to you. There is no difference of opinion between us, and therefore you should enter the government with us. This is the formation which I propose—so many from Upper Canada, so many from Lower Canada, and so many from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. My colleagues and myself consulted first upon the justice of the proposition, assuming that we should go into the government at all, and we came to the conclusion that the proposition of Mr. Macdonald was not fair to the party we represent. We contended that if there was to be a coalition, for the purpose of putting the new machinery in motion, it was fair to let the liberal party in all the Provinces have at least an equal representation in the government, and we contended further, that if five seats in the cabinet were to be given to Upper Canada, three of them should be given to the reform party. These were the conditions we made, and for two days it was supposed they would not be accepted, and we believed we would not have any part or lot in the matter. But while matters were in that position, what occurred? Gentlemen from the lower Provinces, representing the liberal party there, arrived in this country, and said to us: "We are liberals; we have in times past struggled for responsible government and other libe-

ral principles; we have worked with you in the construction of this constitution, and we desire to work with you in putting its machinery into motion. But if you find that the conditions will be such as to prevent you from taking office, we will have to take office in the Government of Mr. Macdonald." Well, gentlemen, we saw what would be the result if we declined—that the majorities in three eastern Provinces would be represented in the government, and that those majorities would support it, while the majority in Upper Canada would be unrepresented: and we feared that it would be shown to England and to the world that this great remedy, which Mr. Brown and Mr. Macdonald, and men of all political parties had agreed to, had solved none of the evils complained of, that Upper Canada was still subjected to the same disabilities as formerly, and the disease existed with tenfold greater virulence than before. Why, what would we have seen? We would have seen the three eastern Provinces banding together and supporting a government to which the majority in Upper Canada was opposed. You may talk about the corruption of Coalitions, but if you have a corrupt government it is one that commands but a narrow majority in the legislature, and is fighting for its existence from day to day. These are the corrupt governments, not those possessing a strong support and confident in its strength, and these are the governments it is not desirable to see established in consequence of party distinctions when there are no questions to divide parties. That is our opinion, and that has been our decision, whatever others may do or whatever others may say. I see by the *Globe* of to-day that Mr. Howland and myself are quietly read out of the reform party.—We are no longer members of it—"the die is cast." Well sir, I have been denounced by that paper before, and I do not know that I have

suffered much in consequence of it. I have pursued the course I thought right, irrespective of those denunciations, and I think that on the whole I have come out pretty successfully. (Cheers.) I believe that we should not put our hands forth for the destruction of that constitution which we have formed after much anxiety and labor. (Cries of "oh.") Gentlemen say "oh," but I would like to hear reasons rather than marks of dissent. I should like gentlemen to look at the past position of the party, and see of what it was you complained. You complained that a government remained in power which did not possess the confidence of a majority of people of Upper Canada, and you complained that you contributed a larger portion of the revenue and had no control of the money which you placed in the hands of that government. Well, what is the position of affairs to-day? We have undertaken to build an Intercolonial railway. When some years ago the government to which I belonged proposed to do this the honorable gentleman behind me (Mr. Brown) who is taking notes and will probably reply to my speech, denounced it as a most atrocious thing to build a railway where nobody wanted to go, though soon afterwards we found him ready to build even six intercolonial railroads, to obtain this measure of Confederation. (Hear, hear and cheers.) Now, sir, if the course is taken which is proposed by one of these resolutions, and which is advocated by the *Globe* newspaper, I say that the reform party will have no influence in the government of this country. (Hear, hear.) I say that a government can be constructed and will be constructed in spite of that party, and that it will carry a majority in the legislature of the new Union. That government will have this railway to build, running through three Provinces, it will have the selection of a route and control over the expenditure of

this large sum of money; and Mr. Macdonald must have lost much of the astuteness with which he was credited by honorable gentlemen I see around me, and his colleagues much of their corrupt tendencies, if they do not control the government of the new Dominion for the next ten years. (Cheers and counter-cheers.) Sir, I do not believe they will have that opportunity. They have not got it now, and I do not desire that they should. A government has been formed, composed of seven liberals—one of whom will probably not hold a portfolio—and six conservatives.

Mr. BROWN.—H-a-a-a-w!

Mr. McDUGALL.—The honorable gentleman says "Haw!" I have heard that style of argument before from him on many occasions, but I do not believe that it is very formidable. (Laughter.) What I have said I assert as a fact, and let him disprove it if he can. There are, perhaps, many in this room who think that he and those who sit beside him are better qualified to have the control of the reform party and to represent it in the government than the gentlemen, humble reformers as they may be, who happen to have the honor at this moment. There are probably, also, others of a different opinion. But, at all events, we have the position, and mean to hold it. (Ironical cheers and counter-cheers.)

A VOICE.—You cannot do it.

Mr. MACDOUGALL.—The gentleman says we cannot do it; well that will be settled when the elections take place, which I hope will be shortly; and then we will see whether the reform party in Upper Canada are prepared to ignore the opinions of every member of their party east of Toronto, or whether the party consists of all reformers besides those in the peninsula of Western Canada. (Hear, hear.) We hold that the work of confederation is not yet done. We believe that as the policy upon which we

started was to bring Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and the North-west territory into the confederation, the object we had in view upon the formation of the government is not accomplished until that is attained. We believe that the terms upon which those provinces are to be brought in are just as important as those upon which Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were brought in, and that it is just as necessary and important to form a strong government to arrange them, instead of one holding its existence by a precarious tenure from day to day. These are my views, and those who are of a different opinion will have an opportunity of expressing it at the polls.

A DELEGATE.—When will we have the elections?

Mr. MACDOUGALL.—The gentleman asks when we shall have the elections. Well, he will probably find that out sooner than he desires. (Laughter.) I give it as my opinion only that the government to be formed on the 1st of July should either be confirmed or rejected by a Parliament elected as speedily as possible. (Cheers.) I do not know, gentlemen, that under the circumstances in which I am placed it is unnecessary for me to detain you any longer. As to these resolutions I have nothing particular to say concerning them. They express all the well-worn principles of the reform party. (Hear, hear.) As to this resolution condemning coalition, I do not agree with it. I do not think the coalition ought to cease until the work which was commenced under Mr. Brown's auspices is finished. Before this constitution was obtained we had several alternatives before us. Mr. Brown advocated representation by population under the old Union, which some of us thought impracticable, and no support could be got for it from Lower Canada. Mr. McGee, I believe, did once under a qualification vote for the principle. Other members of the reform

party thought we ought to have a dissolution of the Union between Upper and Lower Canada. We had, as I have said, three or four alternatives before us, but now that is all gone. We have Confederation, but if that fails what is your alternative?

A VOICE—Look to Washington. (Laughter.)

Mr. MACDOUGALL.—I do not know whether the gentleman who cries "look to Washington" means it as a joke or a sneer; but I am afraid a great many in the Dominion are looking to Washington now, and that more in Western Canada would look to Washington if, after all, we find ourselves in the same position as before—the majority of Upper Canada ignored and the government resting on the majorities obtained in the eastern provinces. (Cheers.) I will be no party to that state of things. I believe we can secure all the fair and reasonable interests of Upper Canada until the whole work is completed. You have nothing now but a cry, nothing but the names of men. No measure or policy is submitted to the new government, which for anything I know to the contrary may not be submitted to the country. When its policy is declared, then you will have something perhaps about which you may differ and which may have the effect of again dividing parties.

A VOICE—What about J. A. Macdonald?

Mr. McDougall—I have heard John A. Macdonald denounced. I am no political admirer of John A. Macdonald. I have fought him as hard as any man and perhaps have given him a little trouble; but I will do him the justice to say, that since the time when he entered this coalition he has worked as loyally, as zealously, as industriously and honestly as any one for the purpose of securing a good constitution for this country. Gentlemen may say that he was forced to do so, and may think so, and may think so if they please. I think that if he had not been convinced that the new system was a good one for the country he would have kept his party together, carried on the government, and fought the battle he has carried on for so many years without going into a coalition and agreeing to this arrangement. I know something of the work he has done and the attention he has bestowed to perfect this

constitution as far as possible; and I am willing to do him justice and to say that he and his colleagues are entitled to some share of the gratitude of his country. Mr. Brown is not entitled to monopolize all the credit, all the praise, and all the glory of the achievement. Public men of all parties have laboured for it. Talk about the tories having done nothing! Who carried it in Nova Scotia? A tory party periled their existence by acting with us, and surely it rests not with us to say that no tory shall have credit in the matter. Sir, toryism and reform and all the rest of it are buried in the past. We have got as our Yankee friends would say a "clean slate," or as the scholar would call it a *tabula rasa*. We have a new constitution: there is the machine—work it. We have heard Mr. Brown say that there is no reason now why the Roman Catholics should not work with the reformers, because there are now no longer questions at issue between them. So too there is no reason now why the conservatives and reformers should not work together. We will, no doubt, have parties. It is the normal condition of governments to be carried on by parties. Differences will undoubtedly arise, and I could perhaps start questions here to-night upon which there would be differences of opinion in this assemblage. There are commercial questions—questions of free trade and protection, the tariff, the currency, and so on—which may be before us in a short time, and upon these politicians and newspaper writers all over the country will take sides. In the meantime, this is the position in which we find ourselves:—We will shortly have an election. The government, as a government will have a policy. Gentlemen in this room may say that they will oppose the government without knowing anything of its policy, but the country will not be satisfied with such a course as that. It will make known its policy and then appeal to the country. It will have its friends and its opponents, and a line will be drawn between the two. Its friends will be supported as far as it is possible for any government to support its friends. I believe it will be found when the election takes place, that its friends will outnumber its opponents in this as in other sections of the Dominion, and I am willing to await the decision of that election. (Cheers and ironical shouts.)