

of Mr. Baldwin and his friends and the leading Frenchmen of Lower Canada.

Mr. Baldwin has now split with Sir Charles Metcalfe, and persuaded his colleagues and many others to join him; split not upon a mere question of local policy, but upon the allegation against Sir Charles Metcalfe that he has violated the fundamental principles of Responsible Government. His Excellency alleges that what has been charged upon him as a violation of Responsible government, is the maintenance of an essential prerogative of the Crown in the working of that system itself, both theoretically and practically, as much as Mr. Baldwin does.

Now, as it is not a question of local policy between two parties in the country, or between one party and the Governor General but a question of constitutional law as to what is and what is not the constitutional prerogative of the Crown, or the right of the subject, in the system of Responsible Government; and it is avowed in the Resolutions of the House of Assembly of September, 1841, that the "Governor is responsible to the Imperial authority alone;" and as the question of the constitutional prerogative of the Crown involves beyond all doubt an imperial interest of the highest and most sacred character; the Imperial authority is unquestionably the legitimate tribunal of appeal in such a question—the only constitutional judge whether the right of power in dispute between the Governor General and Mr. Baldwin is the legitimate property of the Crown or the subject, the same as the Court of Queen's Bench is the legal tribunal of decision on any question of property between man and man. Mr. Baldwin practically renounces the Imperial authority by refusing to appeal to it, and by appealing through the Toronto Association to the people of Canada. If the people of Canada are the tribunal of judgment on one question of constitutional prerogative, they are so on every question of constitutional prerogative. Then the Governor is no longer responsible to the Imperial authority, and Canada is an independent country. Mr. Baldwin's proceedings therefore, not only lead to independence, but involve (unconsciously, I admit, from theoretical views) a practical declaration of independence before the arrival of the fourth of July! and all the declamation and vehemence of the Toronto Association to the contrary cannot make it otherwise, or resist the force of this necessary conclusion.

Are the people of Western Canada prepared for this? If not, then pause before you commit yourselves with the Toronto Association.—Nay, I am persuaded that Mr. Baldwin and his associates will shrink from this conclusion. Far be it from me to charge them with *intending* such a conclusion, any more than I would charge Antimonians with *intending* to make the Divine Being the author of sin. I push it as the legitimated consequence of their own proceeding. If they dread the conclusion, let them abandon the premises which involve it.

Then, one branch of the Imperial authority

—the Crown, with the advice of a ministry jealous of their rights—has decided in favour of Sir Charles Metcalfe's construction of constitutional prerogative. There is no reason to believe that the British parliament will decide differently from her Majesty and her advisers. Are the people of Canada, then, prepared to resist the decision of the Imperial authority! It is no longer a question between Mr. Baldwin and Sir Charles Metcalfe, but between Mr. Baldwin and the Imperial authority.

The strength of the empire will of course, be employed, (if need be) to support its authorities. Are the people of Canada prepared for such a collision? If not, avoid, I beseech you, the precipice towards which the Toronto Association is drawing you.

Sir Charles Metcalfe's humanity and liberality have prevented him from inflicting upon the whole country the evils which the conduct of a few individuals was calculated to produce. He has not formed a high party government as he might have done. True to his avowed principles of justice and liberality, he has calmly waited (by the permission of the Home Government) several months, that the people might understand the error imposed upon them—that they might become aware of their position, and interests, and danger, and accede to his constitutional offers and wishes of forming a just and liberal Government. If they persist in maintaining an unconstitutional stand against the constitutional decision of the Imperial authority as did some persons in Lower Canada, in the first instance, against the Constitutional Act of Union—then must Sir Charles soon do, as did Lord Sydenham, appeal to those who will support him, and employ whatever power may be necessary to sustain the constituted authorities of the land; and upon the Toronto Association and those who allow themselves to be goaded by it, will rest the responsibility of the state of things which may ensue.

It is at such a crisis and under such circumstances, I respectfully and earnestly appeal to the Inhabitants of Western Canada; and while I shall vindicate the character of a calumniated and injured man, I will shew that the very facts alleged in the impeachment against him, are, when fully considered in all their bearings, those which ought to endear him most to the people of Canada as the faithful and generous friend of their common rights and interests.

If a Wesley, a Fletcher, a Robert Hall, a Chalmers have become before the people of Great Britain at eventful epochs of public affairs, and if I have heretofore been fully justified for coming before the Canadian public on less important occasions, no apology is necessary to justify my undertaking the task to which I now address myself.

May 27, 1844.

E. RYERSON.

SIR CHARLES METCALFE
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