

the evils complained of, a striking at the very root of the abuses, and thus providing effectually for their extinction. Such a man must either be recreant to his principles, or he must conduct the Government in accordance with them. As a man of established character would not do the first, the second was the only alternative; the government would be administered on liberal principles, and deserve the support of liberal men. On this ground, partly, that support was given.

The next new guarantee for good government brings us to the second part of the demand for "responsible government;"—namely, that our local affairs shall be managed by a kind of provincial ministry. This has been virtually admitted. All Government business, which of course includes the chief part of the business of the country, will be managed in the Legislature by Government officers, heads of departments. His Excellency commenced this system in the late session of the Legislature in Upper Canada, and it will be fully acted upon in future. It may take some time to bring the system into precise form and uniform action, but this must be expected. It took many years in England before the practical working of the Constitution finally settled into that kind of spontaneous action by which the Executive is kept in harmony with the representatives of the people.—The resignation of the Government officers, or their change of policy, when in a settled minority in the Legislature, will follow as a matter of course from the new position they sustain, for they cannot keep it unless they can command a majority. The practical working of the system will soon tell on whom this responsibility will best devolve, but it will probably include the law officers of the Crown, and at least one or two heads of other departments; in short, a sufficient number of public officers to properly manage Government business in the Legislature, and keep the administration of the Government in general agreement with the interests of the people.

It must be distinctly understood, however, that this responsibility is not absolute, but is subject to the exceptions before stated. That is,—if the Assembly should oppose the Government on a matter "in which the honour of the Crown, or the interests of the Empire are deeply concerned," then, in such a case, the officers of Government would not resign or

change their policy, but would be sustained in their course by the Home Government. But it is evident that, in the nature of things, these exceptions are very few, and with the exercise of any thing like moderation in the Assembly they will never arise at all. For all practical purposes, the general rule will be, that the Executive must act in harmony with the people's representatives. It must be observed also, that we have confined our remarks to *political responsibility*—that is, responsibility for political conduct. For, as to official responsibility, there was never any question at all about that. It was agreed on all hands, by Tories as well as reformers, that every public officer should be subjected to the strictest accountability, both as to the proper performance of his official duties, and especially the punctual discharge of all his official liabilities, either to the public revenue or to individuals.

The question of "responsible government," then, has been settled, like most other great questions, by a compromise: the reformers have yielded the right of the Imperial Government to interfere in our local affairs, guarded as before stated; and Her Majesty has appointed liberal Statesmen to be Governors of the Colonies, who will manage their local affairs in the Legislature by heads of departments,—a virtual Provincial ministry. It is true there has been no formal compromise or settlement, but this is the state of the question, and in this state it is likely to remain. All the great ends of good government can hereby be secured, and no man who loves his country more than his party will seek to disturb the arrangement.

We have now stated the leading principles which guide our public policy; and we put it to every impartial judge if there be not here a common ground on which all reasonable men may unite, and afford the Government that support which its policy merits. The Conservative will see that the union with Great Britain, the British Constitution, and the supreme control of the Imperial Government, are secured beyond the possibility of danger; and the Reformer will see that by the appointment of liberal Governors, and the management of Government business in the Legislature by heads of departments, who, if they cannot command a majority, cannot conduct the Government, but must resign, or change their course, his liberties are safe, and the interests