

contemporaries. 'Canada has been the death of him,' remarked John Stuart Mill, when intelligence of his Lordship's demise reached London. The saying was in a great measure true. Probably Lord Durham would not, under the most favourable conditions, have attained to a patriarchal age, but he might well have lived a few years longer than he did if he had kept clear of politics, Lord Brougham, and—above all—Canada.

"If Lord Durham's personal career was in any way a failure, his policy for Canada was a splendid success. It established the principles of colonial government. One may say, with little help from the merely fanciful, that the rejoicings of emancipated colonies might have been in his dying ears as he sank into his early grave."

The Home ministry had determined on the union of the two Canadas, and on the acknowledgment in the new constitution of the principle of responsible government. There was a considerable section in either province to which both of these projects were obnoxious. It was a task, therefore, requiring the exercise of consummate skill and prudence to inaugurate the Union.

"The gentleman," says Mr. Dent, "fixed upon to undertake this important mission was Mr. Charles Poulett Thompson, better known to Canadians by his subsequent title of Lord Sydenham. Mr. Thompson, though still a young man to be intrusted with a matter of such importance, had had large experience as a politician and diplomatist. He was particularly well-informed respecting mercantile affairs, having been bred to commercial pursuits, and was an ardent disciple of Free Trade doctrines. He had become a disciple of Mill and Ricardo, and the personal friend of Jeremy Bentham and Joseph Hume. He distinguished himself during his first Parliamentary session. He soon won a reputation, not as an eloquent speaker—though he always spoke fluently and sensibly—but as a shrewd and business-like member of Parliament. Some of his speeches smacked strongly of Radicalism, but his mind was of an essentially practical order, and he cared little for mere speculative theories about liberty, equality, and the natural rights of mankind. He was above all things a *useful* man, and from time to time rendered great services to his party. It was noticed that he was always able to make the best of a complicated and awkward situation, and was not deterred by Quixotic scruples from turning even the slips