

on Sir Charles Metcalfe's part, to Responsible Government, or liberal measures, or liberal men. More I do not believe. Had Sir Charles Metcalfe been received and treated by his late Council with the consideration and confidence to which his position, talents and character alike entitled him, I cannot but feel confident that the result would have been altogether different.

I may perhaps be told that in assuming this explanation of the antagonism about which so much has been said, I assume more than I have a right to do; more than the known facts of the case warrant us in believing. Let the history of the late Session answer. I am much mistaken, if it do not prove the ex-Ministers quite imprudent enough to have made all the mistakes I charge upon them, in their early intercourse with the Governor General. It may also, at the same time, throw some light on the question, and how they came to choose the time they did for their final rupture with him.

The Session opened with the announcement that the removal of the Seat of Government was to be made a Cabinet question. With that decision of theirs, I have no fault to find. Like every one else in Canada, I hold that the Home Government ought to have settled the question, instead of forcing it, with all the angry excitement its discussion must produce, upon the Province. This mischief done, however, the best course the Provincial Government could take was to make the discussion as little exciting as possible, by an early, final decision of the controversy; a result which they made much more probable, when they made the matter a Cabinet question. But having done this, they should have done more. They could not but know that Mr. Harrison's resignation would have to be explained in Parliament at a very early day; that the necessity for this explanation must force from them their seat of Government message at that early day; and that the discussion of the question in either House *might* follow immediately. In England, under such circumstances, Ministers would have taken care to write beforehand to all their supporters in both Houses asking their attendance on or before the day when the message was to come down; a course which at once prevents surprise and pleases those to whom the attention is paid. This was not done; few of their friends in the Upper House had reached Kingston when the message came down to that body: and the Opposition, by discussing it there immediately, defeated them. Hence, when the measure had passed the Lower House, it became necessary to bring it on a second time in the Council; to obtain the vote of the real majority of that body; and this most unusual step, following closely as it did, upon all the irritations of the debates in the two Houses, produced the secession *en masse* of the minority,—that is to say, of 14 of the 19 Upper Canadian Councillors. A quorum of the Council from that day forward, could hard-

ly be kept together; and the continuance of the Session, and the fate of *all* its measures, hung in doubt almost from day to day, in consequence.

With other great measures of the Session, the course taken was much the same. Their name was Legion; and long before the rupture with the Governor, their jostling and crowding of each other on the Order book had so embarrassed the House as almost to make it impossible for it to get through with any of them. So many long, important Bills could not be read by members in the time allowed. Half the number would have fully occupied them. They complained, too, (the friends of the Government I mean,) that the measures were generally thrown before the House without the courtesy of previous consultation with any of them. In England, Ministerial Bills are shown, before being introduced, to leading Ministerial Members; suggestions are asked for; suggestions, indeed, from any Ministerial Member are welcomed. But here, in most instances, every member not in the Administration had these long Bills put into his hand to read for the first time, after the House had gone through the form of reading them for the first time; friendly objections to matters of mere detail were again and again met with a degree of *hauteur*, on the part of individual ministers amounting to downright rudeness; and amendments, generally speaking, were resisted. As introduced, most of the measures were good in principle and calculated to be popular; but this was neither the way to make them as popular or as nearly perfect as they might be made, nor yet the way to keep up the strength of even a strong Administration.

Instances there were, however, of mistakes in principle. Mr. Lafontaine's Lower Canadian Judicature Bills, for example, (in their main features, a transcript of his Bills long ago laid before the House of Assembly of Lower Canada,) embodied the principle of allowing judges everywhere to sit in appeal upon their own decisions; a principle new and monstrous, as applied to the Civil Code of Lower Canada, which makes the judge constantly determine the fact and the law alike, without the aid of a jury. Yet on this proposition Ministers made a strong fight, rather than yield to the remonstrances of their warmest friends. Mr. Viger was obliged, though with evident reluctance, to contest the point through more than one pretty warm debate; and it was not till they had been beaten on a division that they gave it up.

Their course with the Upper Canada Assessment Bill was marked by still greater indiscretion. In principle, the Bill itself was excellent; but it proposed a great innovation on the existing system, and from its not having been distributed over the country in time, the people of Upper Canada, generally, were far from comprehending what it really was. It was said to be a measure to increase taxation; its provisions were denounced as inquisitorial; and from its proposing to make personal pro-