

government and a people, but in addition he had also found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state.

He made two major recommendations:

- 1) The reunion of Lower and Upper Canada, and
- 2) The immediate grant of responsible government.

The first recommendation was implemented at once by the Act of Union. But this Act made no mention of responsible government. The Governor continued to be his own first Minister, endeavouring to secure the election of those he favored.

In 1846, however, a change of government in Great Britain brought Earl Gray to the colonial office and he immediately set about to give the Durham proposal a fair trial. Lord Elgin, who was Lord Durham's son-in-law, was appointed Governor of the Province of Canada and instructed to govern in conformity with the advice of Ministers acceptable to the majority in the Assembly and responsible for every act of government to the elected representatives of the people themselves.

Lord Durham had also expressed the view that the country could not survive with two races, two languages and two cultures. He felt that the nationality of the French-Canadians should be obliterated and union was designed for that purpose. But when your ancestors and mine got effective control of the administration of their affairs, they staked their future on a denial of this policy and for a hundred years now, they have been shown to be right.

Of course, they had to get rid of legislative union because that required a degree of co-operation between them which it was beyond human power to achieve at that time but they did, your fathers and mine, the Fathers of Confederation, devise a system which would work and which has worked, that of provincial autonomy in matters which are local and private within a province, and that of a central government charged with the matters which are of general concern to all the provinces.

It worked because they, themselves, were responsible to themselves and their fellow-citizens to make it work, and because they were able to achieve that degree of confidence in themselves and in their fellows which is essential to the smooth operation of any system of government based upon the consent of the governed.

Lord Durham also deplored the fact that strictly local government had not been sufficiently developed in the Canadian provinces. We were being initiated into self-government at exactly the wrong end and those who were not trusted with the management of their own parish or town affairs, were expected to influence by their votes the destinies of a State.

Well, it may be that one hundred years ago our municipal institutions and our other administrative bodies to arrange our local affairs were not as well organized and as efficient as they afterwards became and there can be no doubt that there is much similarity in the manner in which problems of public concern have to be handled regardless of the level at which they arise.

There had been, nevertheless, some incipient progress made in the organization of local units of government. The city of Saint John, in New Brunswick, had been incorporated by Royal Charter in 1785, Montreal was incorporated in 1831, Quebec in 1858, Toronto in 1834, Halifax in 1841 and, after all, it was only in 1835 that the great municipal reform in Britain was inaugurated by the British Municipal Reform Act of that year.