

indeed, that these principles were a necessary product of the political situation of affairs in Canada in those days, and that no particular individual can lay claim to having been their sole originator. The scheme of Responsible Government in Canada simply contemplated the application to this country of the principles which underlie the Constitution of Great Britain. It claimed that the acts of the Executive should be approved of by a majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly, those who contended for it claimed nothing which was not clearly their right. They sought to engraft no foreign or radical change upon the Constitution. This was clearly understood a few years later, by Lord Durham, as witness the following extract from his celebrated Report:—"It needs no change in the principles of government, no invention of a new constitutional theory, to supply the remedy which would, in my opinion, completely remove the existing political disorders. It needs but to follow out consistently the principles of the British Constitution, and introduce into the government of these great colonies those wise provisions by which alone the working of the representative system can in any country be rendered harmonious and efficient. . . . But the Crown must, on the other hand, submit to the necessary consequences of representative institutions, and if it has to carry on the government in unison with a representative body, it must consent to carry it on by means of those in whom that representative body has confidence. . . . This change might be effected by a single despatch containing such instructions, or, if any legal enactment were requisite, it would only be one that would render it necessary that the official acts of the Governor should be countersigned by some public functionary. This would induce responsibility for every act of the Government, and as a natural consequence it would necessitate the substitution of a system of administration by means of competent heads of departments for the present rude machinery of an executive council. . . . I admit that the system which I propose would in fact place the internal government of the colony in the hands of the colonists themselves, and that we should thus leave to them the execution of the laws of which we have long entrusted the making solely to them." This was precisely the stand taken by the advocates of Responsible Government. This, in a word, *was* Responsible Government, and it was principally with a view to bring about such a state of things that Robert Baldwin determined to enter