

PUBLIC MEN AND PUBLIC LIFE IN CANADA

This criminal outrage did much to complete the ruin of the old Tory party, and still further strengthened the Lafontaine-Baldwin Government, who have been called "the Great Ministry" in consequence of the splendid volume of legislation they passed, "much of which survives to the present day, and is a fitting monument to the justice, rectitude and broad statesmanship of its members."*

The Lafontaine-Baldwin Administration continued in office all-powerful until the fall of 1851, when its distinguished leaders grew weary of the political strife in which they had so long been engaged. Amidst universal regret Mr. Baldwin resigned in August, and the Hon. Francis Hincks, already conspicuous for financial ability, became leader of the House of Assembly in his place. Mr. Lafontaine could be prevailed upon to linger behind his colleague only until October, when his retirement also took place and brought this famous administration to a close.

It had been arranged that Mr. Hincks and the Hon. A. N. Morin should reconstruct the Cabinet and become the Upper and Lower Canada leaders

* "The Great Ministry! Yes; for everything in this world is relative, and when the work of the second Lafontaine-Baldwin Ministry is fairly contrasted with that of other Canadian ministries of its epoch, it must be acknowledged to have been great at least by comparison. No administration known to our history has ever effected so much during an equal space of time. None has contained so many men whose abilities entitled them to rank among colonial statesmen as compared with mere politicians."—"Canada Since the Union of 1841," by John Charles Dent, Vol. II., page 238.