

BALDWIN LAFONTAINE HINCKS

terminated to retain the influence they had acquired, and regarding the protests of the plainer people of the province with a certain supercilious contempt. Nor is it to be supposed that the adherents of the Family Compact embodied in themselves the very essence of tyranny. They represented merely, within their restricted sphere, those principles of class government and vested interests which were still the dominant political factor in every country of Europe. Of the high moral quality and sterling patriotism of such men as Robinson, the attorney-general, there can be no doubt. The exaggerated diatribes of the indignant Radicals in which the ruling class figure as the "tools of servile power,"¹ are as wide of the mark as the later denunciations launched against the party of Reform.

The growing agitation in Upper Canada presently found an energetic leader in William Lyon Mackenzie, a Scotchman of humble parentage. Born at Springfield in Forfarshire in 1795, he came in 1820 to try his fortunes in Canada. He set up in business in a small way at the village of York, removing presently to Dundas. It is typical of the restricted commercial life of the time that Mackenzie and his partner dealt in drugs, hardware, jewelry, toys, confections, dye stuffs

¹ Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate*, No. 1. Compare the petition prepared for presentation to the home government by Robert Fleming Gourlay, whose agitation in the second decade of the century was one of the first expressions of the gathering discontent: "Corruption, indeed, has reached such a height in this province that it is thought no part of the British empire witnesses the like."