

## BALDWIN LAFONTAINE HINCKS

understand the vote which, midway in the session of 1851, led to the resignation of Robert Baldwin.

Mackenzie, who was aiding the Clear Grits in their persistent opposition to the cabinet, brought in a motion (June 26th, 1851) in favour of abolishing the court of chancery—one of the reforms recommended in the platforms of the Clear Grits. This court, formerly a valid subject of grievance, had been reorganized by Baldwin in his Act of 1849, and he had seen no reason to regard its present operation as unsatisfactory. Mackenzie's motion was rejected, but its rejection was only effected by the votes of LaFontaine and his French-Canadian supporters: twenty-seven of the Upper Canadian votes were given against Baldwin, many of them representing the opinion of Upper Canadian lawyers. Under happier auspices Baldwin might not have regarded this vote as a matter of vital importance, for he had never professed himself a believer in the doctrine of the "double majority,"<sup>1</sup> the need, that is to say, of a majority support in each section of the province at the same time. But the mortification arising in this instance was coupled with a realization of the difficulties that were thickening about the government, and with a knowledge that the

<sup>1</sup> Turcotte (*Canada sous l'Union*, p. 173) says that Baldwin by his resignation sanctioned the principle of the "double majority." But compare Hincks, *Political History*, p. 28. See also letter of Baldwin to LaFontaine, cited above, pp. 263-5.