

Legislative Assembly. (1) Mr. Mercier succeeded Mr. Taillon, who became leader of the opposition.

From that moment henceforth, we enter upon the history of our own times. Thanks to a small majority in the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Mercier retained power until June 17th, 1890, when the General Elections were held, which tripled his majority. Mr. Taillon could have been elected by acclamation in Montcalm, but he wished to contest the enemy's stronghold in the county of Jacques Cartier. There he fell, and, after fifteen years of public life, during which he had occupied the foremost positions, he retired and resumed, without regret, we believe, the practice of his profession.

I have said that Mr. Mercier had tripled his majority at the General Elections of 1890. That is to say that he was all powerful in the new legislature. But, as he had reached the summit of the Capitol, he was not far from the Tarpeian Rock. On his return from a voyage to Europe, in the summer of 1891, a journey, we are told, that was one triumphant progress, he found the Senate of Canada occupied with the consideration of a question which referred to the Baie des Chaleurs Railroad. Public opinion was excited over the declarations made in the Senate, and Mr. Angers, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Quebec, invited Mr. Mercier to give explanations. A commission of enquiry was appointed; numerous witnesses were examined, and, on December 17th, 1891, Mr. Angers dismissed Mr. Mercier, and summoned Mr. de Boucherville to form a ministry.

For a year and a half previously, Mr. Taillon had devoted himself ardently to the practice of his profession. Mr. de Boucherville summoned him to his side, and, with a rare disinterestedness, Mr. Taillon agreed to form one of the new cabinet, without holding any portfolio. This was equivalent to accepting the task but refusing the remuneration. The General Elections of March 7th, 1892, followed. Mr. Taillon was elected in the County of Chambly, which had long been held by the enemy, and the de Boucherville Government, throughout the province, scored a brilliant triumph.

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(1). The fall of this ministry recalls the fall of the Brown-Dorion Cabinet of 1858, which also lived only two days.