

Reformer from mature deliberation and conviction. It is impossible to estimate his character rightly, however, unless it is borne in mind that his views were very far removed from those of extreme Radicals. In some respects, indeed, he had many of the qualities of a Conservative. Change, considered merely as a change, was distasteful to him, and he was disposed to look favourably upon existing institutions until they were proved to be prejudicial to the public welfare. But he had already pondered seriously, and with a conscientious desire to arrive at a just opinion, as to the reciprocal obligations of the governing classes and the governed. His high sense of justice convinced him that there were many things in our colonial polity which it was the imperative duty of every well-wisher of the country to do his utmost to remove. He had made no secret of his views, and his high personal character, social position, and acknowledged abilities were such as to give those views additional weight. He had already proved himself a wise and prudent adviser on one or two election committees, and had come to be looked upon as "the coming man" of the Reform party. That party was then in its infancy in this Province, and may be said to have come into existence about the year 1820. It grew rapidly, and soon began to occasion uneasiness to the faction which swayed the destinies of the Province with so high a hand. It was not difficult for far-sighted men to perceive that momentous changes were imminent. The idea of a responsible Executive had already presented itself to the minds of the thoughtful, and the Baldwins, both father and son, had expressed strong opinions on the subject. The result of the general elections of 1824 was a Reform majority in the House of Assembly, and several important Government measures were defeated. The Legislative Council, however, was of course still in the hands of the oligarchy. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, began to entertain gloomy forebodings of disaster. "The long shadows of Canadian Radicalism," says a Canadian writer, "were already setting down on his administration, and the *Colonial Advocate*, controlled by William Lyon Mackenzie, sadly disturbed his prospects of dignified repose with pungent diatribes on packed juries and Government abuses. Even then the clouds were gathering for the storm of 1838." As yet, however, there was little in common between Mr. Mackenzie and the Baldwins except hatred of oppression and a desire to see the Government of the country in the hands of capable and disinterested men. Even Mackenzie at this time