

should be based on the number of the population. A motion in this sense was made in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. P. J. O. Chauveau, member for the county of Quebec, but opposed by Lafontaine, who foreseeing that the population of Upper Canada — now Ontario — would increase more rapidly than that of our province, objected to this mode of representation, which in the long run could only result to our detriment.

The system of responsible government was finally and fully established by the wise policy of Lord Elgin, the most illustrious of our English governors before Confederation. This governor allowed himself to be exclusively guided by the advice of his ministers and never swerved from this rule, even when the Tories revolted in 1849, made an attempt on his life and burnt the Parliament House, because he had given his sanction to the bill granting an indemnity to the victims of the insurrection of 1837, in Lower Canada.

### *Annexation Movement*

This was the expiring effort of the Family Compact to annihilate the influence of the French Canadians. Seeing that they had failed in their insurrection and that their conduct had been condemned by the Imperial authorities, they organized the annexation movement of 1849, to which the commercial crisis through which the country was passing at the time; in consequence of the establishment of Free Trade in England, lent a certain opportuneness, and then battle-weary ended by forming an alliance in 1854 with some of the Liberal leaders who had succeeded Lafontaine.

### *Era of Progress*

To counteract the consequence of the change made by England in her fiscal policy and to arrest the crisis which this change had brought about in Canada, the Coalition ministries, which succeeded that of Lafontaine, inaugurated an era of public improvements, which introduced a large amount of capital into the country and imparted great activity to trade. This activity was also greatly enhanced by the reciprocity treaty, which threw open to our natural products the profitable market of the United States. Lastly came the abolition of the seigniorial tenure, to crown the economic reforms which had given such an extraordinary impulse to the material progress of the country.

To the Liberal and Coalition governments, which succeeded each other from 1841 to 1867, we are also indebted for the municipal and school organisations actually in force in our province, for our Civil Code and code of civil procedure, for our system of judicial decentralization and for the first serious measures adopted to stimulate colonization.

On the occasion of the coalition of 1854, a fraction of the Reform party of Upper Canada separated from Mr. Hincks and adopted as their programme the assertions of the rights of the upper province against the pretended encroachments of Lower Canada. Placed on such burning ground, politics took an exciting turn and divided the two parties about equally. Warmly