

PUBLIC MEN AND PUBLIC LIFE IN CANADA

sally recognized. Then began the final battle for Responsible Government in Canada, the bitterness and violence of which hardly can be realized at the present day.

The result has long been a matter of history. Sir Charles Metcalfe unconstitutionally ruled the Province for nine months, without any Government at all; then he partially filled up the offices under the premiership of the Hon. W. H. Draper (afterwards Chief Justice), and, backed up by the Tory party, a temporary advantage was gained at the general elections in 1844 through means of bribery and violence previously unparalleled. The voice of the country was temporarily stifled by these devices, but not altered or subdued.

The bitter struggle went on in Parliament and throughout the country until that terrible disease, cancer, caused Sir Charles to resign, and his successor, Lord Elgin, was sworn in as Governor-General at Montreal, on the 30th January, 1847. His Lordship was a man at once sagacious and eloquent, courtly in manners, and friendly to constitutional principles. The Draper Administration was still sustained in the House of Assembly by a small majority, and continued His Excellency's advisers throughout the year. But at the ensuing general elections, which came off in January, 1848, Messrs. Baldwin and Lafontaine and their Reform supporters swept everything before them at the polls, both in Upper and Lower Canada, and the long and bitter battle for Responsible Government was at last and forever won.