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one on which ngratulated ; hing defeats ver received. own had the t practically the country The Govern- d the whole tion of the e represented arty perhaps ition which

could vindicate its existence by no political reason, and certainly elated by their sweeping victory at the polls. It is not too much to say that the power and the temper of such a Government were a peril to the best interests of the country. In any circumstances the power of the ministry would have been formidable in virtue of their patronage, which is uncontrolled by competitive examinations or any other check on the personal predilections of a minister or the exorbitant expectations of political supporters. But at the formation of the Dominion there were several peculiar circumstances which threw into the hands of the Government an unusual power for obtaining corrupt support; and it was, in fact, the abuse of this power that led to a gradual reaction against them, and to their final overthrow in 1874.

This reaction appeared first in the Province of Ontario, where the tide of political feeling rises to a higher flow, and stretches into larger issues, than in other parts of the Dominion. Here an opposition arose in the provincial legislature, which, though not identifying itself with the position taken by Mr. Brown at the elections, yet received the powerful support of his organ, the 'Globe' newspaper of Toronto. The leader of this opposition was Mr. Edward Blake, Q.C., lately the president of the council in the Dominion Government. Mr. Blake had entered political life only at the first general election for the Dominion. Appearing at first as an independent critic of the course pursued by the Ontario ministry, he conducted his criticisms with such ability, that he was soon recognized by both sides of the House as the most formidable opponent with whom the Government had to contend.

The prime minister of Ontario, on the other hand, was the Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald, who had long been a prominent friend of Mr. Brown among the leaders of the old Reform party. Mr. Macdonald had been selected by his namesake and former opponent, Sir John Macdonald, on the ground that the Province of Ontario would be most fairly represented by an old Reformer, while one of the old Conservatives became premier of Quebec—a province which, under the dominant influence of the Catholic clergy, has generally been Conservative. There

is no doubt that Mr. Macdonald intended to guide himself by the principles of reform, and these principles continued, in fact, to direct his administration in many respects, especially in the economy by which it was generally characterized. But his intentions met with a serious obstacle in the inveterate hostility of that party among his old friends which had sided with Mr. Brown, and he was therefore driven to seek assistance from allies from whom it would have been to his advantage if he had held aloof. Accordingly the Government of Ontario, though headed by an old Liberal minister, and representing a decidedly Liberal province, soon began to show tendencies towards a policy in distinct antagonism to the principles of all Liberal government. It was thus in the legislative assembly of Ontario that the new issues of political warfare in Canada first assumed definite shape, and it was here that politicians began to range themselves into new parties.

Any one who watched with earnest eyes the contests in the legislature of Ontario could scarcely fail to see, and to see more clearly from year to year, that here Liberalism had met its old foe in new shapes, and was surely fighting a battle which should not be without an interest to men. We take it that the struggle of Liberal statesmanship in all ages has been to find an effective check by the people upon their executive government; and the foe of Liberalism all along has been the endeavor of political adventurers—be they monarchs, hereditary oligarchies, or cabinets of ministers—to hold themselves above popular control. Under a constitution like that of Canada, and still more under one like the American, it is not difficult to see how a cabinet, by unscrupulous artifices, might attain a position almost as free from responsibility to the people as that of the veriest hereditary despot—a position from which they could be dislodged only by an extraordinary outburst of popular indignation.

One source of enormous power which a Government possesses for securing its position unjustly is to be found in the expenditure on public works. In a new country such expenditure must always be large, and in Canada ten years ago it was unusually increased owing to works