

powers, Lord Durham had. Russell said¹ it was proposed "to set aside and suspend for a time the present Constitution of Lower Canada, and to place the authority—despotic authority if the right hon. baronet (Sir Robert Peel) would have it so—in the hands of the Governor-General in Council." Again, on January 26th, Russell said,² "In short, Lord Durham in proceeding to Lower Canada will proceed there with our instructions, and will not consider his discretion fettered by any resolution or any vote which has been come to by the House on the subject." Molesworth was even more emphatic³ : "The Governor alone should be made answerable for every act done or omitted ; all responsibility should be concentrated upon his single head, and the noble lord should be made to feel that, though he alone would merit all the praise of success, he must equally bear all the odium, blame, and deep discredit of failure. . . . In proportion as Lord Durham was independent of the control of the Colonial Office, or even of Her Majesty's Government, in exactly the same ratio would the probability of a successful termination of these affairs increase. . . . The first act of the noble lord should be one of grace and mercy, an oblivion of all past political offences—a general amnesty." Finally, Hume, speaking for the "Friends of Canada," said⁴ "that he should be sorry to see the despotic power granted by that Act—for despotic it was in every sense of the term—exercised by any person but Lord Durham, to whom he had no objection to confide it."

The course of the debate in the House of Lords, where Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, brought in the Bill on January 18th, was not dissimilar in some respects to that in the Commons. Glenelg had not forgotten the dispatches of Gosford telling of the dreams of Papineau and "la nation Canadienne," and expressed his opinion that the mutual hostility of the English and the French

¹ "Hansard," Vol. XL., p. 154.

² *Ibid.*, p. 546.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 358.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 584.