

semblance of the British Constitution on which it was based. On the one hand it gave the people representation in the Legislature, and on the other placed all the substantial power in an Executive, over which the people's House could exercise no control. The result was, in the course of time, an irrepressible conflict between the elected Assembly and the nominated Executive and Legislative Councils who, with the Governor, really governed the country. The Executive Government did not bear any responsibility to the people as represented in the Legislature, and was generally a mere reflex of the will of the Governor, who was sometimes an irascible military man, accustomed to the discipline of a garrison, and little inclined to conciliatory or moderate methods of administering public affairs. The Governor-General himself was always instructed by the Imperial authorities, who, it must be presumed, too often in the pressure of other and, as they believed, more important affairs, left matters pretty much in the hands of some clerk in Downing Street. Lord Durham, during his brief tenure of office as Governor-General and High Commissioner, immediately recognized the important fact that his plan of reuniting the Canadas under one Legislature would be hardly workable, unless the Government was responsible to the popular branch.

'I would not impair,' he wrote in his Report of 1839, 'a single prerogative of the Crown; on the contrary, I believe that the interests of the people of these provinces require the protection of prerogatives which have not hitherto been exercised. But the Crown must, on the other hand, submit to the necessary consequences of representative institutions; and if it has to carry on the government in unison with a representative body, it must consent to carry it on by means of those in whom that representative body has confidence.'

The result of Lord Durham's mission was the Act of 1840, reuniting the two provinces of Canada; a measure well calculated to promote the material, the political, and the intellectual development of the two sections, since it enlarged their sphere of political action and otherwise stimulated their national growth. The outcome of the union was the concession of Responsible Government in its completest sense, by the time Lord Elgin assumed the Governorship. This important constitutional prin-