

## TOLD OF OUR GOVERNMENT

MR. G. S. LINDSEY SPEAKS.

Before the Canadian Club He Related Canada's Struggle for Responsible Government.

There would appear to be a great revival of interest in Canadian history. Recently some of our largest churches have heard discourses from the pulpit on the part played by the church in the stormy days of old.

Last week, the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux held the attention of a large audience of business men while he told the story of the Quebec Act, and today a still larger body listened to Mr. G. S. Lindsey, when he explained the rise of self government in Canada before the Canadian Club. He commenced just at the point where the Quebec Act story was completed.

"The Constitutional Act of 1791 was an outcome of the workings of the Quebec Act," said Mr. Lindsey. "It was a creation of the younger Pitt and was enacted to pacify the English colonists who were somewhat displeased with the act of 1774. This brings us to the period when Canada was divided into two sections: Upper Canada and Lower Canada; the division being roughly the Ottawa River.

### WAS A BROAD POLICY.

"Under this division, a legislative council and a legislative assembly were to be appointed, and the sovereign was to be represented by a governor. The governor had much to do with the formation of the Council, but the Assembly was chosen by the people." The speaker referred to the great statesman, Fox, who was against the division of Canada at this time, but who laid down a motto which was, after half a century, adopted as the rule of colonial administration. Fox was convinced that the only way to retain distant colonies to advantage was to enable them to govern themselves. The speaker traced the closing days of the 18th century in Canada, when Governor Simcoe as pushed about putting the new act to force.

### THE TROUBLES OF 1837.

"It would take too long to trace the various grievances of the people which grew up under this system of government. In the course of forty or fifty years, and which ended in the display of arms in 1837," said Mr. Lindsey. He then referred to William Lyon Mackenzie, a man whose name figures very prominently in these days. Mackenzie is a man greatly before his time, and a punishment for this invariable shape, he has been compelled to pass through history greatly misunderstood. In order to prove this, Mr. Lindsey read the petition of 1828, when the people of Canada petitioned George III. setting out the defects in the Legislative Assembly, and praying for responsible government. At this time the use in Lower Canada had become so politic that they refused the customs supplies. A commission investigated at the request of the King and ordered against the bequest of government, and ended up their report stating that a colonial government could impose all the inconveniences of home of the benefits of colonies England.

### SHOW OF ARMS.

The story of the rebellion in Lower Canada and in the Upper Province is no review," said Mr. Lindsey. It is well known, and although a great literary failure, was a great political success, for the rebellion arose out of the thought that all hope had been shed for responsible government, yet just a few months later we find the Earl of Durham in Canada, and him we secure self government. Durham was too broad-minded a man to pass by a show of arms, no matter how futile it had been in the field. To

him it was a lesson showing the danger marks of the administration of that day, and he strengthened out the language, only as a great man could. The Durham report of the year 1838 is one of the greatest of British State papers.

### ALL THE SAME.

Mr. Lindsey made a few quotations from this report to show in what a thorough manner it had been prepared. Lord Durham had found that the government of all parts of British America was similar, and that all had ended or were about to end in the same way. He stated that it was only possible to lay the seeds of a great system of government which should some day grow and displace all dissension and unrest, and he discovered that the people had not the slightest confidence in large numbers of the councils. "Responsible government, in the truest sense of the word, and as quickly as possible," was his remedy, and he added that the Colonial Constitution should be an "exact transcript" of that of Great Britain.

### TOOK TEN YEARS.

"Responsible government did not follow in the immediate wake of the Durham report, but by ten years, or 1848, it was fairly well established in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the two Canadas. Lord Durham resigned his post of Governor owing to an order for the banishment of several rebels to Bermuda being recalled by the Home authorities.

"Under the skillful rule of Poutletto Thompson, afterwards Lord Sydenham, the union of the provinces became strengthened and the old idea of a Lower and Upper division was slowly wiped away. Sir Charles Bagot followed as Governor, and he in turn was succeeded by Sir Charles Metcalfe, a man who wore himself out trying to suppress the idea of responsible government and only succeeded in delaying it. For a few years further the well planted seeds were struggling toward the sunlight, and in 1847 the United Parliament was given full control of all the revenues of the province and Canada was given the right to enter into trade relations with the United States.

### 1867 A GREAT TIME.

"In 1867 the passing of the British North America Act was the stroke which united all the provinces, excepting Newfoundland and Labrador, into one grand merger, and in 1871 Canada obtained the right to be represented in the making of treaties and then the British troops were withdrawn and Canada was left to defend herself at her own cost and with her own men. "Canada will one day do justice to my memory," were the dying words of Lord Durham. "The day has surely come," said Mr. Lindsey, "and the hearts of Canadians strong in his faith, will ever keep his memory green. Bold and large as were his plans, he builded better than he knew; he built an empire."

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