

instance, in the dismissal of lieutenant-governors, the governor-general as a rule was empowered to act. The obligation imposed upon the Marquis of Lorne, Governor of Canada, to follow the advice of his ministers, in a case of the nature referred to, when he was opposed to their views, was considered as the crowning feature and the final consecration of responsible government in Canada, although it was done to the detriment of provincial autonomy. It has been strongly contended that the official beheading of Lieutenant-Governor Letellier by the federal government established a principle and precedent that the lieutenant-governors were the servants of the federal government and the tools, to a certain extent, of the party in power; and that in case of friction between the federal and provincial governments, the latter could not always rely upon them. It must be admitted that it would require a great force of character in a lieutenant-governor to do his duty against the will of those who had the power to dismiss him. However, it must be admitted also that the principles laid down on the occasion above mentioned by the Imperial authorities in their instructions to the Marquis of Lorne were the most absolute and solemn consecration of responsible government in Canada.

It is now generally understood that the governors should follow the advice of their ministers, except in cases where they (the governors) would be acting as agents of Great Britain in matters having an Imperial character, although they have still the absolute power of refusing the opinion of their constitutional advisers on the ground of public welfare and when another cabinet could be formed immediately to accept the responsibility of the act. But the cases where such steps could be taken are so extreme and exceptional that the governors will very seldom deem it proper or wise to have recourse to it.

Since the Letellier case there has been no friction between the governors and their advisers, at least as regards the application of responsible government. The people of Canada have the full benefit of the British constitution, and the French Canadians are not the last to recognize what they owe to that glorious institution. They look upon it as the bulwark of liberty and civilization all over the world; assured that under its wings