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Responsible Government—An Enigma.

In welcoming Responsible Government with so much eagerness, we were little acquainted with what we received. The colonists believed it was that full responsibility, which more than once in England had forced the sovereign to receive for ministers, those whom in other times he called his enemies, or with tears and despair, had refused to receive as such. But the ministers quickly declared, that in a colony this responsibility was not precisely the same as at the metropolis. They told us what it is not, but did not tell us what it is. It must, then, be an enigma interpreted differently by him who offers, and by him who receives it; hence the fertile source of misunderstandings, complaints, and recriminations between the Governor and the representatives. For the electors throughout the country, it must be that which the House of Assembly defined it to be. During a short interval, under Sir C. Bagot, it worked happily; it has ceased to do so since. His successor, Lord Metcalfe, immediately after his arrival, wrote, that there existed an antagonism between himself and his Ministers, who possessed the support and confidence of a large number of representatives. He had private confidants.—Upon the advice of irresponsible ministers, he disposed of employments without consulting those who were responsible to the country for the choice. They felt that the interests of the colony were wounded by this conduct, and that it was unjust and offensive to themselves; they resigned. The house sanctioned them. That was the legitimate tribunal, which in the first instance, was competent to decide between them and him. He ought to have recalled them to their posts. He did not do so; but placed himself in collision with the House, and from that moment ceased to be fit to continue the administration of the country, which in the General Election confirmed the vote of approbation, which from their colleagues the ex-ministers had received. The country has not, and will not change its opinions. That is a warning which has hitherto been invariably given to every Governor, and must be continued. The representatives are the only authority in the country, of which the affections, the passions, the interests, if you will, are identical with those of the people. Sometimes perhaps in matters of small importance they may be deceived, since they are men; but they will doubtless be deceived less often than the other authorities, who are also men—men much more interested in withdrawing themselves from the supervision and controul of public opinion, and popular election. It is, then, a duty alike of prudence and gratitude to rally in all cases round the majority of the representatives.

On occasions of conflict there is much stronger probability of their being right, than that a Governor, brought up in a different state of society from our own, should be so. This reasonable presumption, that with respect to us, they are in error when they are at strife with our representatives, has become more strong since they came willingly upon a mission so unjust, as that of working a system, so inequitable in its principles and details, as the act of union. In your country then, as well as in all others throughout the country, it will be proper to sustain those candidates who are known to you, as having allied themselves to the Ministry, who strove with energy against the Governor Metcalfe, and against his unconstitutional practice of attempting to govern, by other advisers than those which the country gave him. It will be proper that you should force the same men back into power.

Responsible Government a cruel Mockery.

If Responsible Government be a reality, the time is come when it may do more good than I hope

from it; I who only regard it as a mockery.—Those who believe in its sincerity, and, therefore, in its real importance, will have the opportunity they desire to advance the cause of reform. If the new Governor, by himself, or by the Legislative Council, of which he is always the master, shall seek to hinder liberal measures which may be proposed, they will be undecieved, a little later than myself, as to the value of the despatches of Lord John Russell, and they will then commence a more energetic agitation than has hitherto existed. In all that they have done in the Legislature, in the conditions which they have annexed to their return to the Ministry, in the noble disinterestedness with which they resigned their charges, I approve of their conduct.

I am surprised and afflicted by the moderation, which has prevented them from taking into consideration any of the measures that they approved in 1834, which has prevented them from ever agitating the repeal of the Union.—They are constrained by the necessity of coaxing the Liberals of Upper Canada, who cannot so easily discover that they are fallen into a fatal error, so long as they indulge the very slightest hope of advantageously working Responsible Government. Every division among Liberals of whatever shade, ought to be studiously avoided, and it is on this account, that I must hesitate to yield myself to your spontaneous invitation for my return to public life.

Results of Lord John Russell's Robbery of the Canadian Exchequer.

Nothing can be more honourable to me than th is step on your part; and I may add, that nothing can be more consoling after the inexhaustible chagrin, which we feel at the conflagration and devastation of so large a portion of the country, at the bloody executions, the exile, the transportation, the sufferings after illegal military sentences, of so great a number of the dearest and most respected of our fellow citizens, than his manifestation on your part, which proves that you remain the same men in politics that you were in 1834, and that you believe me, that I remain the same I was on the day of our forced separation, unshaken in my attachment to the reforms which I then demanded, after thirty years of political study, carried on with all the assiduity of which I am capable.

A Strong Opposition, with Principles.

I see little chance of promoting at present the public good in the manner which appears to me the most efficacious, by a strong opposition rather than by an administration, which will be restricted by instructions coming from England, if the custom, which used to be observed, be still maintained, of mingling in Colonial deliberations—by a strong opposition which should have for its avowed programme some important reforms, submitted to the consideration of the people, in the same manner as the resolutions voted by the Legislature in 1836, or such as the manifesto, which the Quebec Committee of Reform and Progress has just put forth.

Before the end of the next parliamentary session, the reasonable doubt, which may exist at present among many sincere friends of the country, as to whether the course which I prefer is the best, or the worst, will have been definitely decided. The probabilities that our political friends are about to find themselves stronger in the next parliament than they were, in numbers, at the last are so great, that I see them in power and at work. If they succeed in doing the good which you, they, and I wish for, their course will be the best. If they do not so succeed, we shall be altogether, people and representatives, constituents and nominees, there will be nothing to do, but to organise