

measure of their own? As to their Legislation for Lower Canada, it has been oscillating in the extreme. First building up and then pulling down, as in the case of the Municipalities, like children playing at card houses; and upon the whole, producing nothing but universal dissatisfaction in that section of the Province.

Again, how have they used the power which their small majority gave them in conducting the business of the House? Look at the proceedings to suppress enquiry into the Montreal, Leeds, and other elections. Look at their conduct respecting the vacancy in the seat for Simcoe, their refusal of papers, and their protection of the Commissioner of Crown Lands from the condemnation which the Administration of his department merited.

They have not only greatly increased the patronage of the Crown but it is perfectly notorious that there never was a period in which that patronage was more unscrupulously made use of, not merely with the usual leaning toward party interests, but for the purchase of that support, by which alone their political existence was, week after week, prolonged.

I do not however by any means pretend to have gone over all the points upon which the present Provincial Ministry are open to condemnation. I might have dwelt upon their illegal dealing with the public property by the issue of Land Berys to an enormous amount in direct defiance of one Act of Parliament, and upon their neglect in not having the oaths taken as directed by another, and upon many others, but neither space nor time permits—enough, however, has I hope been said, to show, not only that I was bound to withhold confidence from them as one of the Representatives of the people of Canada, but that there are ample grounds for that national condemnation which even those who have yielded them a party support admit them to have merited.

I doubt not, that now that they are compelled to meet the electors at the hustings, there will be abundance of promises both from them and their supporters as to what they mean to do hereafter. But let the country recollect the promises which were made at the last election. Let them remember all that was promised respecting the opening of the University and other liberal measures and compare those magnificent promises with the Ministerial performances, and then judge how far, after past experience, promises from such a quarter can be depended upon.

But it is sometimes asked what have the Liberals done for the country? Let the questioner look back into the history of the last thirty years. Is it not to their exertions that the people are indebted for the recognition of their rights as British subjects to a practical influence upon the administration of their government?—For their Municipal Councils, and through them for the control and management of their local taxes?—For a Common School system, by which £50,000 of the public revenue is applied annually to this important means of social improvement?—For the independence of their Judges?—For an election law, admitted even by our opponents to be a vast improvement on the old system?—For the Marriage Act—and in fact for all the other real ameliorations in our Laws and Institutions, from the repeal of the odious Gouty Act, down to the present time. All which measures in their turn met with a vigorous, and for a long time successful opposition from the party now in power. He therefore who will look into the past history of the country with the candour of a faithful searcher after truth, will have no occasion to repeat the question—What have the Liberals party done for the country?

Then as regards the future. My past course, and the remarks which the topics already referred to have called forth, might perhaps for the most part be sufficient. But before concluding I will remark, that as regards the great fundamentals of the Constitution, I believe them to be so well settled; and that henceforth we shall have no more Representatives of the Sovereign making the doctrines of the Charleses and the Jameses, the standard by which to govern British subjects in the nineteenth century, but that henceforth their viceregal governments will be distinguished by adherence to the constitutional principles acknowledged by all parties in England. Principles which, relieving her Majesty's Representative from the invidious position of the head of a party, will render him, as he should be the common Father of the whole people: not as was well said by the present Governor General in his speech at Hamilton, a mere pageant, but a living spirit and the connecting link which binds, and will I trust, continue to bind this great Colony to the parent state in affectionate and prosperous union.

As respects the important question of the state of the Representation, I am of opinion that the present number of Representatives is too small for so extensive a Province. And while I do not believe that exact equality, by which each member would always be the Representative of a precisely equal number of the population, is to be attained, even if practically expedient. I am of opinion that a much nearer approach to such equality is necessary, before the

Parliament can be truly said to represent the public opinion of Canada.

As respects Education, I am for leaving it, more particularly in its elementary branch, as much under the direction and control of Paroia as is consistent with a useful uniformity, and the practical working of the system. And while I would be far from rejecting what was good in the institutions of other countries, let the form of their governments be what it may, I am not prepared to admit that the influence of a central Executive should be predominant in every school room in the country, or that the State should usurp the place of the parent of the child, in the sense understood either by some of the free nations of antiquity, or by some of the despotic governments of modern Europe. I should, however, endeavour to place Education, in all its branches, within the reach of the whole community—and to this end I would not only preserve the appropriation already made, but I would seek every opportunity of increasing and enlarging the means by which the knowledge, the intelligence and mental improvement so essential to the welfare of a free people, might be advanced and extended. Then as respects that portion of this important question, which is involved in the constitution of the University of King's College; while I am adverse to the destruction of that valuable institution by the partition of its endowment. I am for placing it upon a liberal footing, by which it will be relieved of that character of exclusiveness which now attaches to it, and rendered instrumental in diffusing the blessings of a high standard of education throughout the Province. I am, therefore, not in favour of the Bill of the present Ministry, which I am satisfied is nothing but a delusion and a snare, and which when the state of the endowment comes to be fully examined, will be found to leave nothing for the Grammar Schools which I am persuaded have been referred to in it, merely for the purpose of trying by that measure, to catch some breath of popular favour. But if the endowment is to be diverted from its original purpose, I am then for such an application of it, as will render it really available to the people, by appropriating not merely an illusory and rarefied surplus, but the whole endowment to the Grammar and Common Schools.

As regards the Agricultural and Commercial interests of the country, I am in favor of that freedom of trade and navigation which will prevent the great mass of our population from paying tribute to particular sections of it.

As regards the Judiciary, I am desirous of seeing the Court of Chancery put upon a footing better adapted to the condition and wants of the country, and the Court of Appeals so arranged as to make the passing through it something more than a mere form, preparatory to the expensive process of an appeal to England. This, at least as regards appeals at Common Law, is now the only purpose that it serves.

These measures with all practical economy in the public expenditure, and such an application of the resources of the Province, as may best advance its general prosperity, with out partiality to one section over another,—a Post Office system,—an improved administration of the Crown Lands Department,—the relieving the Lumber Trade from that vexatious interference which has been the subject of so much complaint in the Lumbering sections of the Province; such attention to the important subject of Emigration, as may, as far as possible, save us from a recurrence of the calamities of the last season, and provide for the settlement of our wild lands, with a healthy and prosperous population—I look upon as of the highest importance to the interests of the Province. These, with others that might be mentioned, open a large field for the active energies of a strong and vigorous administration, such an administration I am desirous to see in office, and to support to the utmost of my power.

As to myself, I have no desire for place, and my past life shows that I would neither accept nor retain it at the sacrifice of my principles. But a Canadian, by both birth and adoption, with all that is most near and dear to me bound up with the fortunes of the Province, and without a shilling's worth of property in any other country in the world, I do feel a deep interest in its prosperity, and in the happiness of its people. The extent to which I may have it in my power to be useful in forwarding these great objects will, of course, greatly depend upon the coming contest. That contest, I have every confidence will result in the success of the great cause in which we have been so long engaged. But let every man remember, that he has his own individual part to perform in the struggle, and that that part will not be performed by a mere recording of his vote, but that his country has a right to every exertion he may have it in his power to make, to ensure success.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ROBERT BALDWIN.

Toronto, 8th December, 1847.