

(B)

A Thoughtful
performance and
valuable through

Margaret
Bor

June Goddard.

[Redacted]

P.O. Box 805,

Nairobi,

Kenya.

Kenya High School.

2-

Margaret
Bor
Muse
Hob

Essay B.

Lord Durham

Lord Durham was born on the 12th April 1792. In 1805 he went to Eton where he obtained a commission in the regiment of the 10th Hussars. He was married in 1812 to Henriette the daughter of Lord Cholmondeley but she died three years later in 1815. He was elected, as a member for County Durham, to the House of Commons in 1813. He belonged to the Whig party, and being an extreme Whig he was known as a Radical. In 1830 he joined ^{the} Colonization Society which had been formed by a man called Wakefield, who was also a Radical. This society was formed to help the colonies, and after the American colonies broke away from the Empire, the society realised that the colonies wanted their own government. The society gained considerable influence over the parliament at home and created among the Politicians a more favourable attitude towards the colonies. It was for this Colonization Society that Durham did a lot of his work; and in 1837 he accepted the post of Governor General of Canada to enquire into the trouble which had been going on since the revolt of the American colonies.

To understand the question of government in the colonies, and exactly what Lord Durham did, a look at Canada before and after Lord Durham was made Governor General must be made.

after the war of the American Independence, the government of Canada became a very difficult problem. Before the war there had only been French settlers in the province of Quebec, who were content to be ruled over. But after the war some of the people from America who wanted to be under the English flag had fled from America and settled round the shores of Lake Ontario, so forming the state of Ontario. These Empire loyalists had been used to a certain amount of self-government; also it would have been unfair to give them less freedom than they had had in the U.S.A. since they had left their homes to be under the British flag. The French colony was still by far the biggest so to grant a measure of self-government to the colony as a whole, would have been placing the loyalists under the control of the French. The problem of government was solved for a time by dividing Canada into two provinces, Upper (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec) and granting representative government to each, which meant that over both was to be a Governor General and a Lieutenant General over each. This government, however, did not work because each ~~Governor~~ ^{Lieutenant} General, whose work it was to choose the members for the Upper House ^{as there were no hereditary rights,} in nearly always turned to the same families for the members, and as the ^{provinces} colonies grew, jealousy arose and consequently riots broke out, and the British parliament realised something must be done, so they sent Lord Durham out to issue his Report.

Lord Durham landed in Canada in 1838. He was chosen for the task because it was thought that as he was a Radical and a supporter of enlightened views on colonial development, he was likely to inspire the confidence of the colonists. As soon as he landed he crushed any remaining thoughts of rebellion by

deporting eight ringleaders to Bermuda and threatening those who had fled to America with persecution if they returned. By doing this he gained the hate of the colonists and of the British Government, because it was not right for him to have done such a deed, so in November 1838 after only a few months in Canada he returned to England, where in 1839 he issued his famous "Report" and then died in 1840 a broken man.

Short though his stay was he issued his Report which afterwards became very famous. The points he stressed in the Report were that the two provinces should be joined and that ~~ess~~ they should have responsible Government.

The British parliament immediately acted on the point of joining the two provinces by the Reunion Act of 1840. By this act the two provinces were joined and a two chamber parliament set up, which was to consist of an elected House of Representatives ^{and} of a Council nominated by the Governor General. The Act however contained no mention of the responsibility of the Ministers, and for some years some variety was adopted; sometimes a Governor General filled ministerial posts with men who had the confidence of the majority in the House of ~~Commons~~ Representatives and sometimes with others. The basic principle of the Report was put into operation when Lord Elgin, Durham's son-in-law, became Governor General. He supported Durham's views and followed out the British custom of choosing his ministers ~~for~~ from the majority in the Elected House. This was also observed by his predecessors.

This was ^(no) much liked however; & riots continued owing to racial conditions.

The great change came when on July 1st 1867 the act was passed making Canada the Dominion of Canada. and federal Government was

W! of a
disturbance
of power between
Central and
Provincial.

introduced.

Federal Government consists of two houses namely the senate of life members nominated by the Governor General, and the House of Commons of members elected for five years unless defeated by a Bill. In both houses the number of members allotted to each province was to be proportional to the population.

Each province had its own local government over which was a Lieutenant General who was the connection between the provincial parliament and the Central Government. The provincial parliaments were empowered to ^{legislate & to} ~~raise~~ revenue for matters of local interest only, all other matters being the business of the Federal parliament. Thus the principle of Durham's report was put into being.

To justify the choice of the words that Durham did for the Empire there are many reasons. One of the first and main reasons, I think, is that without the starting of responsible government there might never have been an Empire for any other statesman to do much for. Each colony as it formed may have revolted like the American colonies because they did not like being ruled over by the British parliament. By all the rioting which was going on in Canada before the introduction of Responsible Government, it appears to be very likely that ~~they~~ Canada too, would have broken away sooner or later. Admittedly self government should not be given to an unsettled country. This shows very markedly nowadays when India was given responsible government, and the rioting which is taking place there because of the many different religions which do not allow them to unite. Here in Africa I think everyone feels strongly that responsible government should be introduced, because although the ^{colonial} foreign minister has been here from

England he is in no position to judge the state of the native reserves and other conditions which people here in Kenya are fully able to understand and would very much like to do something about, ~~if~~ but cannot without the consent of the British Government.

Lord Durham's work did not only affect ~~these~~ part of the Empire, as did the work of Lord ^{Grey} ~~Grey~~ or Rhodes, but his work has affected the whole of the Empire and brought about an understanding between the colonies, so that there is no jealousy between them. They are willing to join together in times of war and help each other, as well as Britain; or they ~~send help to any other part of the Empire which is in need.~~ ^{send help to any other part of the Empire which is in need.} Responsible Government has given the colonies something to work for and make a success of. It has made them want to develop trade, and develop the country as much as possible.

The introduction of responsible government has made the Empire united and I don't wonder at the fact that other countries would like the same, but none ever seem to go the right way about it. The unity of the Empire has ^{also} heightened English prestige.

England has now got less responsibility, as before Responsible Government was introduced she had to decide on the taxes and send an army to defend the colony. No however the central government of the colony decides on such matters as taxes and any other matter for the good of the country. Although at first England went on providing the army she passed a ~~act~~ saying that they should provide their own.

Responsible Government gave the colonies a right to do what they thought best for their country and made them contented, and although it is the work of the Governor General to appoint the life members of the senate he is in no position to stop any

Bill being passed and the senate only acts as a brake on the House of Commons as the House of Lords does to that in England.

Lord Dufferin therefore has been the man responsible for the building of the Empire as it is today. The only change which has been made since Federal Government was introduced to Canada in 1867 is that it now has control over its own foreign policy whereas before it did not.

Books consulted were:- The Encyclopaedia Britannica,
The Cambridge History of the British Empire,
British History by Brett.