

Erie (September 10, 1813) and lake Champlain (September 11, 1814), the British fleets sustained serious reverses; while in the engagements of Stoney Creek (June 5, 1813) and Crysler's Farm (November 11, 1813) and the very decisive one of Chateauguay (October 26, 1813), victory rested with the defenders of Canada. The main effect of the war, which was brought to a close by the Treaty of Ghent (December 24, 1814), was to strengthen British sentiment in Canada and to give to the Canadians of both provinces an increased sense both of self-reliance and of confidence in the protection of the Mother Country. Lower Canada suffered but little from the depredations of the enemy. Upper Canada, on the other hand, suffered seriously, her capital, York, having been captured and its public buildings burnt (April, 1813) and a large extent of her frontier devastated. Nevertheless, when Mr. Gore returned to the province in September, 1815, he reported that the country was in a fairly prosperous condition owing to the large amount of ready money which war expenditure had put into circulation.

The Rebellion of 1837 and Lord Durham's Report.—Towards the close of the year 1837, to resume the domestic history of the country, the political disagreements to which reference has been made resulted in attempts at armed rebellion in both the Canadian provinces. These attempts were speedily repressed, especially in Upper Canada, where the insurrection was confined to a comparatively small section of the population, and occurred at a moment when the provincial government, under Sir F. B. Head, was supported by a large majority of the legislative body.

In consequence of these troubles, the Home Government decided to send out a special commissioner to make a thorough investigation, not only in Upper and Lower Canada, but in all the North American provinces, for all had suffered political restlessness. The person chosen was the Earl of Durham, son-in-law of the second Earl Grey, a man of marked ability and of advanced liberal views. His Lordship arrived at Quebec on May 29, 1838, commissioned as governor-general of the whole of British North America. His stay in the country lasted only five months, but he was, nevertheless, able to lay before the British Government in January, 1839, an exhaustive report, dealing principally with the affairs of the Canadas. He recognized that the time had come for granting a larger measure of political independence to both provinces, and, without indicating the scope he was prepared to allow to the principle, made it clear that in his opinion the chief remedy to be applied was "responsible government". This, however, was to be conditional on a reunion of the provinces as a means of balancing the two races into which the population of Canada was divided, and of procuring as far as possible their harmonious co-operation in working out the destinies of the country. The imperial authorities approved the suggestion, which, however, they recognized as involving very considerable difficulty. Lord Durham might have been entrusted with the duty of carrying it into effect had he not given up his commission on account of the criticism to which some of his plans had been subjected in the British Parliament. The man designated for the task was Charles Poulett Thomson, afterwards raised to the peerage as Baron Sydenham and Toronto.

Thomson arrived at Quebec in October, 1839, and applied himself vigorously to his task, the most difficult part of which was to render the proposition acceptable to the province of Upper Canada, already in full possession of its constitutional rights. The constitution of Lower Canada, as already mentioned, had been suspended, and had been replaced by the appointment of a special council with limited powers. After strenuous negotiations, Thomson succeeded in meeting