Extraordinary Canadians: Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert Baldwin

Extraordinary Canadians: Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert by John Ralston Saul

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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File size	: 261 KB
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Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert Baldwin were two Canadian politicians who played a major role in the development of responsible government in Canada. Lafontaine was a French-Canadian lawyer and politician who served as the first Prime Minister of the Province of Canada from 1848 to 1851. Baldwin was an English-Canadian lawyer and politician who served as the leader of the Reform Party of Upper Canada from 1836 to 1843.

Lafontaine and Baldwin were both born in the early 19th century. Lafontaine was born in Boucherville, Lower Canada, in 1807. Baldwin was born in Toronto, Upper Canada, in 1804. Both men were raised in prominent families. Lafontaine's father was a lawyer and politician, and Baldwin's father was a judge. Both men attended university, Lafontaine at the Collège de Montréal and Baldwin at the University of Toronto.

Lafontaine and Baldwin entered politics in the 1830s. Lafontaine was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada in 1834. Baldwin was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada in 1836. Both men quickly rose to prominence in their respective assemblies. Lafontaine became the leader of the Parti Patriote, a reformist party that advocated for responsible government. Baldwin became the leader of the Reform Party, a similar party in Upper Canada.

Lafontaine and Baldwin worked together to achieve responsible government in Canada. They formed an alliance between the Parti Patriote and the Reform Party. This alliance was known as the Baldwin-Lafontaine Compact. The Compact called for the creation of a responsible government in Canada, in which the government would be responsible to the elected representatives of the people.

Lafontaine and Baldwin's efforts were successful. In 1848, the British government passed the Union Act, which created the Province of Canada. The Union Act also granted responsible government to the new province. Lafontaine and Baldwin became the first Prime Minister and Attorney General of the Province of Canada, respectively.
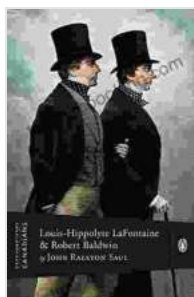
Lafontaine and Baldwin's government was a success. They passed a number of important reforms, including the Municipal Corporations Act, which established local government in Canada, and the Common Schools Act, which established a system of public education. Lafontaine and Baldwin also worked to improve relations between French Canadians and English Canadians.

Lafontaine and Baldwin's government came to an end in 1851, when Lafontaine resigned as Prime Minister. Baldwin followed suit a few months later. However, their legacy lived on. The responsible government that they fought for became the foundation of Canadian democracy.

Lafontaine and Baldwin are considered to be two of the most important figures in Canadian history. They were instrumental in the development of responsible government in Canada, and they helped to shape the country that we live in today.

Additional Resources

- Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine

- Robert Baldwin

- Responsible Government

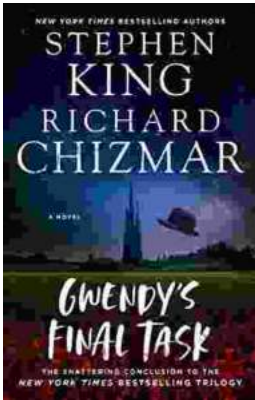### Extraordinary Canadians: Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert by John Ralston Saul

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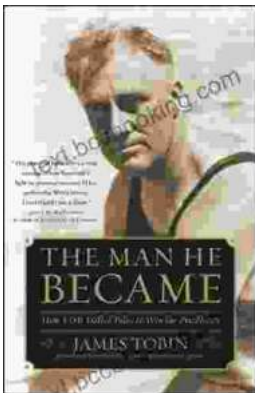|	
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