

CANADA.

But there are some cases of internal government in which the honour of the Crown or the faith of Parliament, or the safety of the state, are so seriously involved, that it would not be possible for Her Majesty to delegate her authority to a ministry in a colony.

I will put for illustration some of the cases which have occurred in that very province where the petition for a responsible executive first arose—I mean Lower Canada.

During the time when a large majority of the Assembly of Lower Canada followed M. Papineau as their leader, it was obviously the aim of that gentleman to discourage all who did their duty to the Crown within the province, and to deter all who should resort to Canada with British habits and feelings from without. I need not say that it would have been impossible for any minister to support, in the Parliament of the United Kingdom, the measures which a ministry, headed by M. Papineau, would have imposed upon the Governor of Lower Canada;—British officers punished for doing their duty; British emigrants defrauded of their property; British merchants discouraged in their lawful pursuits,—would have loudly appealed to Parliament against the Canadian ministry, and would have demanded protection.

Let us suppose the Assembly, as then constituted, to have been sitting when Sir John Colborne suspended two of the judges. Would any councillor, possessing the confidence of the Assembly, have made himself responsible for such an act? And yet the very safety of the province depended on its adoption. Nay, the very orders of which your Excellency is yourself the bearer, respecting Messrs. Bedard and Panet, would never be adopted or put in execution by a ministry depending for existence on a majority led by M. Papineau.

Nor can any one take upon himself to say that such cases will not again occur. The principle once sanctioned, no one can say how soon its application might be dangerous, or even dishonourable; while all will agree that to recall the power thus conceded would be impossible.

While I thus see insuperable objections to the adoption of the principle as it has been stated, I see little or none to the practical views of colonial government recommended by Lord Durham, as I understand them. The Queen's Government have no desire to thwart the representative assemblies of British North America in their measures of reform and improvement. They have no wish to make those provinces the resource for patronage at home. They are earnestly intent on giving to the talent and character of leading persons in the colonies advantages similar to those which talent and character, employed in the public service, obtain in the United Kingdom. Her Majesty has no desire to maintain any system of policy among her North American subjects which opinion condemns. In receiving the Queen's commands, therefore, to protest against any declaration at variance with the honour of the Crown, and the unity of the empire, I am at the same time instructed to announce Her Majesty's gracious intention to look to the affectionate attachment of her people in North America as the best security for permanent dominion.

It is necessary, for this purpose, that no official misconduct should be screened by Her Majesty's representative in the provinces; and that no private interests should be allowed to compete with the general good.

Your Excellency is fully in possession of the principles which have guided Her Majesty's advisers on this subject; and you must be aware that there is no surer way of earning the approbation of the Queen than by maintaining the harmony of the executive with the legislative authorities.

While I have thus cautioned you against any declaration from which dangerous consequences might hereafter flow, and instructed you as to the general line of your conduct, it may be said that I have not drawn any specific line beyond which the power of the Governor on the one hand, and the privileges of the Assembly on the other, ought not to extend. But this must be the case in any mixed government. Every political constitution in which different bodies share the supreme power is only enabled to exist by the forbearance of those among whom this power is distributed. In this respect the example of England may well be imitated. The Sovereign using the prerogative of the Crown to the utmost extent, and the House of Commons exerting its power of the purse to carry all its resolutions into immediate effect, would produce confusion in the country in less than a twelvemonth. So in a colony: the Governor thwarting every legitimate proposition of the Assembly, and the Assembly continually recurring to its

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