

times is dangerous to the whole body politic. It is only necessary to consider the crisis through which the American Republic has so recently passed, to understand the nature of the peril in which the nation finds itself every four years. We have just seen the election of the Chief Magistrate decided by a few hundred votes in a single State, out of over ten million votes that have been polled in the union. Political passion was excited for a while to fever heat; every effort was made by Mr. Blaine and his partisans to arouse old animosities between the North and South; and a few reckless politicians might at any moment have precipitated one of the most terrible conflicts that could convulse a people. It is creditable to the nation that it should have passed through so serious a crisis with so much calmness, and that reckless partisanship has not dared to outrage public opinion, and change the popular verdict as in 1876-7; but, nevertheless, we cannot fail to see that once every four years the people are liable to pass through a similar ordeal. From such dangers Canada is happily free under her constitution, which makes the Sovereign the permanent head of the Executive, and removes her representative from the turmoil of political controversy. In the administration of public affairs, the Governor-General is guided by the advice of responsible advisers, representing the opinions of the majority of the Legislature. In Canada, for many years past, the policy of the Imperial Government has been to refuse to interfere in any way with its domestic affairs, but to leave them entirely in the hands of the Governor and his advisers, who act in such matters in accordance with the well known principles of the British constitutional system. It is only with respect to questions immediately affecting Imperial interests, especially the relations of the Empire with foreign nations, that the Governor can be said to be thrown to any extent on his own responsibility as an Imperial affair. Even in such matters he will generally find it necessary to consult his Colonial advisers, though he may not consider himself bound to adopt their advice. In these cases he can only follow the instructions of the Government, of which he is the accredited representative.

As in England, the Canadian Ministry is practically a committee of the dominant party in Parliament. Here again we