

and that Canada must thenceforth be at liberty to do the best she could for herself with reference to her own commercial circumstances, which are those of a community sharing this continent with the United States.

—The air has been full of rumours of a dissolution of the Legislature of Ontario. There could be no justification for such a step. No constitutional crisis to warrant an appeal to the people had arisen. There could be no assignable reason except a desire on the part of the holders of power to nip in the bud the Equal Rights' movement; in other words, to prevent public opinion from being fairly matured and finding expression at the polls. It is time to protest against the usurpation by the heads of party governments of a power of dissolving Parliament whenever it suits their convenience, and for the purpose of snapping a verdict. Such a practice, besides the turmoil and expense of frequent elections, would be subversive of the independence of Parliament, the members of which would hold their seats, not for the term for which the people in the exercise of its legal power has elected them, but during the pleasure of the Prime Minister. When to this usurped power of dissolution are added those of gerrymandering and of passing such party measures as the Franchise Act, together with a great command of patronage and government appropriations, there is no saying to what extent an unscrupulous Minister might entrench himself in power. Dissolution is the prerogative of the Crown, to be exercised for the purpose of providing the Sovereign with advisers who have the confidence of the people. In England we do not believe that the Sovereign would consent to a purely tactical dissolution. It is true that in 1874, when Mr. Gladstone was allowed to dissolve, there was no constitutional crisis; but Mr. Gladstone had been beaten the year before on the Catholic University question, had then resigned, and had consented to resume office only on the understanding that there was to be an early appeal to the