

colony; and thus the responsibility to Parliament, which in England is produced by and consistent with the powers of supreme legislation, being introduced into a colony where the supremacy in the legislative body does not exist, the weaker body, in fact, is, by a political fiction, made the stronger. The dependency of the colony is at an end; and while the sovereign no longer possesses a confidential servant in the colony, the ministers of the Crown, who are responsible for the preservation of colonial connexion, lose all authority to fulfil the duties of their office.

Either this must be the course pursued by a governor, with responsible advisers, or he must think for himself, independently of those advisers; and, as a matter of course, throw himself for information and advice upon irregular and unknown sources. In such an event, the responsible advisers resign; they have, perhaps, a majority in the provincial Parliament, but they may, notwithstanding, be very wrong. Then comes a dissolution of the provincial Parliament, and, perhaps, an expression of public opinion, by a bare majority, against the Government, and probably inimical to the interests of the empire. Who, then, is to yield? The Government must, in fact, retire from the contest, whether right or wrong, or carry on public affairs without any advisers or public officers.

This cannot be done; so that, after all, the governor of the colony must be responsible to the prevailing party in the colony; and, so far as the empire is concerned, he becomes the sovereign of an independent realm, having no discretion, and therefore no responsibility.

Under such a system, colonial dependence would practically be at an end. If it be resolved, then, to force upon us an independence not yet courted, why subject the colonies to the few miserable years of transition from monarchy to democracy, which must inevitably follow? Why subject the colony to the dissensions of party? Is it to foster a spirit of undying enmity among a people disposed to dwell together in harmony and peace? Far better would it be to unite them at once to an empire which, though rival, and perhaps inimical to England, would in such case interfere sufficiently between contending parties to save them from each other.

If England withdraw her influence, and leave her governors to be the shuttle between colonial parties, no loyalty now existing among any of these parties, will prevent their seeking another influence in the neighbouring republic, to replace the one needlessly withdrawn; and as the French of Lower Canada sought the alliance of their ancient enemies, the Anglo-American population of the neighbouring states, to give them the means of overwhelming the British population, for the time left without the countenance or support of the British Government, so will the losing party in either colony seek some external influence to aid their cause. England refuses the umpirage, and there can be no doubt but that it will be readily offered, before many years, to the United States.

Ireland and Scotland had once independent legislatures; but never, when under the British Crown, had they anything approaching to governments responsible to their respective people; yet the government of them became impracticable the moment it approached to a participation of equal political rights, and they were united with England; because government in the different parts of an empire must be conducted with a view to some supreme ruling power, which is not practicable with several separate and independent legislatures.

The plan of the Earl of Durham is to confine the functions of the local legislatures to affairs strictly colonial, but this limitation of powers is not practicable under his Lordship's system.

It is perfectly true, that it is not for the interest of England to maintain a continual struggle with the local Legislature, for the purpose of upholding any class of persons in the colonies, as the servants of the Crown; but it is no less true, that the honour and interests of the empire are intimately involved with local administration; and that if governors of colonies are to be left unsupported by the imperial Government, and to have their advisers chosen for them by the prevailing party, the usefulness of the governors must be at an end; there must either be continual collision between them and the other public servants in the colonies, or the governors must yield up their judgments and consciences to the keeping of the factions which agitate the countries they are appointed to govern.

In small communities, the future is continually sacrificed to present convenience; but the very temporary nature of the interests which influence the politics of a country like this, with a changing population, with no barriers between the inception of public will and its expression; the comparatively little personal influence held by any, from considerations of property or personal attachment; the ephemeral character of the topics which sway elections, and elevate men for the moment into public favour, with almost a certainty of sinking with the reflux of the wave which lifted them into view, operate against the growing up of that steady influence capable of giving stability to politics, or of defining the views of party. The people are individually essentially free; free from landlords, free from employers, free from the influence of great wealth, as well as from that of high station in the few; every man does as it seems best in his own eyes. The consequence is, that it is scarcely possible to know, for any continuance, what the views of the prominent parliamentary men are, except on a few questions: no considerable number of them think alike; and all, by turns, find themselves in a minority many times during a parliamentary session.

This state of things does not arise from any modification of political institutions, but from the individual independence of the population, caused by the ease with which landed property is acquired. In England, political leaders think for the people; in America, the people think for the Members of Parliament; and as the people is not bound to consistency, like individuals of note, its appetite for change, and for the proposal and attempt to carry