

CANADA.

On reaching Halifax, on the 29th July, I found the popular excitement all over the Dominion was intense, and that my supposed views, sympathies, and intentions were becoming not merely the subject of conjecture, but of assertion and comment in the rival newspapers,—the Government press stating, as if upon authority, that my course would be so and so,—announcements which were met by the Opposition prints with strong admonitory or rather minatory articles. As, at this time, I had by no means made up my mind as to the proper course to be pursued, and felt that no decision was possible until I had seen my Ministers, I determined to take an early opportunity of deprecating the introduction of the Governor-General's name into such a controversy. An occasion soon presented itself, and I have the honour to subjoin an extract from a newspaper report of a speech I made at a dinner given to me by the Halifax Club:—

* * * * * “And here, gentlemen, I should be disposed to conclude this imperfect expression of my thanks, were I not desirous of conveying to my friend the Chief Justice the great gratification I have derived from the remarks which have dropped from him in regard to my official position as Governor-General of this great Dominion. Gentlemen, I am well aware that this is, as it were, a domestic festival, and that nothing could be more inopportune than the slightest allusion to any political topic, but I may be permitted to say this much in reference to what has fallen from the Chief Justice, that if there is one obligation whose importance I appreciate more than other as attaching to the functions of my office, it is the absolute and paramount duty of maintaining not merely an outward attitude of perfect impartiality towards the various parties into which the political world of Canada as well as of the Mother-Country is divided, but still more of preserving that more subtle and inward balance of sympathy, judgment, and opinion which should elevate the Representative of your Sovereign above the faintest suspicion of having any other desire, aim, or ambition than to follow the example of his Royal Mistress in the relation she has constantly maintained towards her Ministers, her Parliament, and her people (tremendous applause); to remember every hour of the day that he has but one duty and but one object—to administer his Government in the interests of the whole Canadian people, and of the Dominion at large. (Great cheering.) Of course, gentlemen, having been but one brief year in the country, my character and my sentiments in these respects can scarcely be known; and there is always a danger during the fervour of these political controversies, which seem to be conducted by the press of Canada with peculiar liveliness and animation—(great laughter), of unauthorized references being made to the Governor-General's supposed sentiments, opinions, and intentions, which would convey to the uninstructed reader a very erroneous impression of the conduct and the attitude of the chief of the State. Gentlemen, I do not make this remark by way of complaint. If there is any person in Canada who has been kindly and considerately dealt with by the press, to whom the press of every political complexion has shown indulgence and good will, it is myself, and it is most natural and by no means an uncomplimentary circumstance that the organs of different shades of opinion should persuade themselves that the Governor-General must necessarily be of their way of thinking, and see through their spectacles. (Laughter.) But what I wish to say once for all, and I do not care how widely this remark is disseminated, is this—that there is no human being who is authorized to make any statement or suggestion as to what my opinion or sentiments may be in respect of any political topic, or who has ever been in a position, or is likely to be in a position, to make anything approaching to a conjecture upon points of this description. It is true, my object and my desire is to inform my mind upon every subject affecting the interests of the country, by conversation and by discussion with anyone who can afford me instruction or information; and it would be very unfortunate for me if this freedom of intercourse with all classes and parties in Canada, from which I derive so much benefit and pleasure, should be trammelled by the dread lest this casual intercourse should become the foundation for inference, comment, or conjecture in the press. No, gentlemen, I understand my duty too well ever to allow my judgment or my sympathies to be surprised into political partisanship. My one thought and desire is the welfare of Canada as a whole. To maintain her honour, to promote her prosperity, to do my duty by her and her entire people, is the sole object of my ambition. When I converse with your public men, it scarcely ever occurs to me to remember to what political party they belong. I only see in them persons devoting themselves, each according to his lights, to the service of his country. My only guiding star in the conduct and maintenance of my official relations with your public men is the Parliament of Canada. (Cheers.) In fact, I suppose I am the only person in the Dominion whose faith in the wisdom and the infallibility of Parliament is never shaken. (Great laughter.) Each of you, gentlemen, only believe in Parliament so long as Parliament acts according to your wishes—(cheers and laughter)—and convictions. I,