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Purity of the Elections. They would, in a Manner, justify Revolt, and stigmatize the Punishment of Traitors as the sanguinary Cruelty of a triumphant Faction, inflicted upon a suffering and oppressed Community; they would assume the Name of the People, as a Distinction, in opposition to those who have upheld the constitutional Powers of Government. All Measures tending to overthrow or unsettle the Institutions of the Province they would denominate popular; all Resistance to them, however numerously maintained, they would ascribe to corrupt Executive Influence, though they are unable to discover its Source or detect its Operations; they would ascribe the Embarrassment of Provincial Credit to Profusion and Extravagance, and the Insecurity and unsettled Condition of the Country to the Want of Prevalence of popular Opinion.

In an independent Country, the Trial of popular Strength by Election seems to decide these Questions, but in a Colony all Parties look with Anxiety for the Judgment of a superior Power. In England, the Dissolution of a Parliament is an Appeal by a Ministry in Power from an existing Parliament to the People. In Upper Canada it bears the Character of a Disapproval of the Acts of the Assembly by the Sovereign. In the present Instance the Questions are asked:—Does the British Government believe the Assembly to have been unfairly elected? Does it believe the Rebellion to be the Result of the unwise and oppressive Conduct of a Colonial Faction? Does it distrust the Decision of the Assembly respecting the great and exciting Question of the Clergy Reserves? Does it approve of the political Doctrines of the Party whose clamorous Opposition commenced the Troubles of the Country? Does it desire to see the Doctrines of that Opposition prevail and become the ruling Principle of Policy in the Colony?

Those calling themselves Constitutionals think they have a Claim not merely to be endured by the Queen's Government; they assert they have suffered much to maintain it, and they look for its warm Approval. Their Opponents have impugned the Conduct, the Motives, and the whole Policy of the Constitutionals. They have made their Charges, and they look for a Judgment in their Favour to be pronounced by a Dissolution of Parliament.

The Reiteration of Charges against the Assembly in the Report of the Earl of Durham, the upholding in that Report of the Principle of Government which formed the extreme Point of the Claims of the Opposition Party, Delay in acceding to the Acts of the Provincial Parliament, the Removal of Sir John Colborne, whose political Opinions were known and decided, naturally encourage the Hopes of the Party claiming to be popular, and give rise to Apprehensions on the other Side which may lead to serious and important Results.

The Question of the Union of the Two Provinces comes to be considered in this State of the Public Mind. Could this Question be considered alone, and apart from other engrossing Topics, much sound Reasoning may be adduced in favour of calling a new Parliament. Had the present Assembly been elected under ordinary Circumstances, or its Line of Policy been less marked, or the Events which have occurred during its Existence less momentous, it might be dissolved without the Probability of Offence being taken by any Portion of the Community, and all would probably acknowledge the Propriety and Justice of submitting a great Question, which must affect the future Destinies of the Country to an incalculable Extent, to the Representatives of the People, fresh from the Hustings, and chosen with a direct View to the particular Duty they are called upon to perform.

The Executive Council, conscious that they have fully concurred with your Excellency in pursuing a Line of Policy independent of violent Party Feeling, and the Government having by this Course sometimes incurred the Displeasure of extreme and violent Partisans on both Sides, feel that they can with the greater Confidence advise your Excellency of the Consequences which they apprehend should the Government take any Step which might be considered decidedly hostile to that Class which has most zealously shown its Adherence to British Connexion.

The Council think it most probable that the other Questions, to which Allusion has been made, will form the leading Points likely to influence the next Elections; and that the Question of the Union will have much less Weight in the Choice of Representatives than the Topics of Discussion arising from the Events which have lately agitated the Colonies.

It is not difficult for a Government to drive from their Position those who have shown themselves zealous in the Support of its legitimate Authority, and should the Class of the Inhabitants of the Province who have taken a distinguished Part in asserting the Supremacy of the Imperial Government imagine themselves slighted or discountenanced, the Effect may be fatal to the Cause which such Men have most warmly supported.

The Council have perceived with the deepest Regret, and they feel it their solemn Duty to state, that some may be found who were willing to risk Property and Life in Defence of British Connexion, and in opposition to any Measures which appear eventually to lead to Separation from the Empire, at length wearied and harassed with the protracted political Struggle, and the ruinous Insecurity which it entails upon this suffering Community, and who would now seek for Peace and Prosperity in a political Change most opposite to their Opinions, and most inconsistent with their previous Conduct. The Danger of such a Sentiment, should it prevail in these Provinces, is too manifest to be disputed. It is too serious even to permit the Risk to be incurred by a prudent Government; and, without wishing to uphold a Party, or advance party Politics, the Council think they are right in representing to your Excellency that there may arise Circumstances sufficient to stifle Zeal, however

No. 1.
Sir G. Arthur
to
Lord J. Russell,
22d Oct. 1839.

Enclosure.