

conducting their affairs; but at least, they have a greater interest in coming to a right judgment on these points, and will take greater pains to do so, than those whose welfare is very remotely and slightly affected by the good or bad legislation of these portions of the empire. If the colonists make bad laws, and select improper persons to conduct their affairs, they will generally be the only, always the greatest, sufferers; and, like the people of other countries, they must bear the ills which they bring on themselves, until they choose to apply the remedy. But it surely cannot be the duty or interest of Great Britain to keep a most expensive military possession of these colonies, in order that a Governor or Secretary of state may be able to confer colonial appointments on one rather than another set of persons in the colonies, for this is really the only question at issue. The slightest acquaintance with these colonies proves the fallacy of the common notion, that any considerable amount of patronage in them is distributed among strangers from the mother country. Whatever inconvenience a consequent frequency of changes among the holders of office may produce, is a necessary disadvantage of free government, which will be amply compensated by the perpetual harmony which the system must produce between the people and its rulers. Nor do I fear that the character of the public servants will, in any respect, suffer from a more popular tenure of office. For I can conceive no system so calculated to fill important posts with inefficient persons as the present, in which public opinion is too little consulted in the original appointment, and in which it is almost impossible to remove those who disappoint the expectations of their usefulness, without inflicting a kind of brand on their capacity or integrity.

I am well aware that many persons, both in the colonies and at home, view the system which I recommend, with considerable alarm, because they distrust the ulterior views of those by whom it was originally proposed, and whom they suspect of urging its adoption with the intent only of enabling them more easily to subvert monarchical institutions, or assert the independence of the colony. I believe, however, that the extent to which these ulterior views exist has been greatly overrated. We must not take every rash expression of disappointment as an indication of a settled aversion to the existing constitution; and my own observation convinces me that the predominant feeling of all the English population of the North American Colonies is that of devoted attachment to the mother country. I believe that neither the interests nor the feelings of the people are incompatible with a colonial government wisely and popularly administered. The proofs, which many who are much dissatisfied with the existing administration of the government, have given of their loyalty, are not to be denied or overlooked. The attachment constantly exhibited by the people of these provinces towards the British crown and empire, has all the characteristics of a strong national feeling. They value the institutions of their country, not merely from a sense of the practical advantages which they confer, but from sentiments of national pride; and they uphold them the more because they are accustomed to view them as marks of nationality, which distinguish them from their republican neighbours. I do not mean to affirm that this is a feeling which no impolicy on the part of the mother country will be unable to impair: but I do most confidently regard it as one which may, if rightly appreciated, be made the link of an enduring and advantageous connexion. The British people of the North American colonies are a people on whom we may safely rely, and to whom we must not grudge power. For it is not to the individuals who have been loudest in demanding the change that I propose to concede the responsibility of the colonial administration, but to the people themselves. Nor can I conceive that any people, or any considerable portion of a people, will view with dissatisfaction a change, which would amount simply to this, that the crown should henceforth consult the wishes of the people in the choice of its servants.

The important alteration in the policy of the colonial government which I recommend, might be wholly or in great part effected for the present by the unaided authority of the crown; and I believe that the great mass of discontent in Upper Canada, which is not directly connected with personal irritation, arising out of the incidents of the late troubles, might be dispelled by an assurance that the government of the colony should henceforth be carried on in conformity with the views of the majority in the Assembly. But I think that for the well-being of the colonies, and the security of the mother country, it is necessary that such a change should be rendered more permanent than a momentary sense of the existing difficulties can insure its being. I cannot believe that persons in power in this country will be restrained from the injudicious interference with the internal management of these colonies which I deprecate, while they remain the petty and divided communities which they now are. The public attention at home is distracted by the various and sometimes contrary complaints of these different contiguous provinces. Each now urges its demands at different times, and in somewhat