

When you were about to leave this Country, I addressed to you Instructions for your Guidance on every Question which was at that Period in Debate with the House of Assembly of Upper Canada. In the Selection of Topics I was guided by the Occurrences of that particular Period. But the Principles on which my Instructions were founded, were of no occasional or transitory Nature, nor were they adopted only to meet the Exigencies of the Moment; they were, on the contrary, the Result of long and earnest Reflection on the State of public Affairs, not merely in the British Empire, but throughout the civilized World. It appeared to my Colleagues and to myself, that in a firm and consistent Adherence to those Principles, would be found the best Bond of Union between the transatlantic and the European Dominions of the Crown.

No. 19.
Lord Glenelg
to
Sir F. B. Head,
8th Sept. 1836.

The Experience of the last few Months has not shaken this Conviction, but has rather given to it additional Strength. If I stood in need of any Authority to prove the Wisdom of the Policy dictated by your original Instructions, I should refer to the frequent Mention of them in your Despatches as having carried you through the Conflict in which you were engaged. By proving that the British Government had no narrow or selfish Ends to pursue in British North America; that they were resolved at once to maintain the existing Constitution, and to remedy every real Grievance; and that it was their sole Aim that the Province should prosper in the Enjoyment of all the Franchises enjoyed by His Majesty's Subjects or their Representatives in this Kingdom, one most essential Object has been gained: the well-affected have been detached from a dangerous Alliance with the Opponents of Order and Tranquillity. The recent Appeal to the People has been made in the Name of a Sovereign whose Claims to the Gratitude and Confidence of his Subjects had been enhanced by the recent Avowal of his gracious and enlightened Purposes. The constituent Bodies have accordingly rallied round the Representative of their King.

The Temper of the last House of Assembly, and the Manner in which they received His Majesty's gracious Answer to their Remonstrances afford conclusive Proof, that by dissolving them you overcame an otherwise insuperable Obstacle, to the Success of the Measures directed by your Instructions. Your Report of the Composition of the new House justifies the sanguine Hope, that important Facilities have now been obtained for the Prosecution of those Measures; thus far an invaluable Service has been rendered. But on the Use to be hereafter made of the Powers which you have thus acquired it will depend whether the Result is upon the whole a Subject of Congratulation or of Regret.

You propose that the Influence and Authority of the Government in the new Assembly, should be exercised in the retracting of a Pledge solemnly given by the King to the Province. I must answer that there is no Danger which ought not to be encountered, nor any Inconvenience which should not be endured, in order to avoid the well-founded Reproach of a Breach of Faith; above all on such a Subject, and on such an Occasion. By the Engagements into which the King has entered His Majesty will abide, not indeed indifferent to the possible Issues of that Decision, but prepared for any Consequence inseparable from the Observance of His Royal Word.

It would be unjust to attribute to you any Design to recommend a Violation of His Majesty's Promise. The Advice which you offer you justify on the Ground that the Conduct of the late House of Assembly, had too clearly proved the contemplated Arrangement to be neither safe nor prudent. Your Proposition, therefore, in effect is, that a Pledge entered into with a view to the public Good ought not to be maintained after more recent Experience has proved that the public Good would not really be promoted by an Adherence to it; and this you assume to be the Case in the present Instance. On this Point, however, I must beg to differ from you. The Assumption on which your Argument proceeds identifies in Character the last and the present Houses of Assembly. It ascribes to the new Representatives of the People those Designs and Principles which led first to the Dissolution and then to the Rejection of their Predecessors. It plainly asserts, or necessarily involves the Assertion, that the Representatives of the People of Upper Canada, from
(41.) whatever