

house of assembly to be the sole judge of its own privileges. I quite admit that the assembly of Lower Canada, in like manner as the house of commons in this country, is alone competent to determine its own privileges—and that if it resolve to expel a member on any ground whatever, the resolution is irreversible, except by the assembly itself. In all free states, the supreme legislative chambers are unavoidably entrusted with power to which there is no strictly assigned limit, not indeed because the abuse of those powers was impossible, but because there do not exist in such states, any higher authorities to which the control of the legislative bodies can be committed. I cannot too clearly express to your lordship my entire acknowledgment that it is not for the executive government to interfere with such privileges. The exercise of the high but irresponsible powers of this nature, with which the imperial parliament and general assemblies in the british colonies are entrusted for the common good, is always watched by the public at large with a careful scrutiny, and it is only in the public opinion, thus formed, and in their own sense of justice, that there can be any control over those exalted bodies which the law exempts from all direct interference with their proceedings.

“ Considering, therefore, the undeniable right of the assembly to follow whatever course it may deem meet respecting Mr. Christie, it would neither be decorous nor conducive to any useful purpose, that the government should enter into a discussion on the subject. His Majesty has fulfilled the task that he deemed incumbent on him, by referring the alleged grievance of a petitioner to that body by which it could most appropriately be examined, and if found just, be redressed. That body has decided that there is no grievance. His Majesty’s government has no power to alter nor consequently any obligation to question this decision. Being of opinion, therefore, that it is not fitting to originate any new communication to the assembly on the subject, I do not instruct your lordship to transmit by message the present despatch; neither, however, do I instruct you to withhold it, if the assembly shall apply to you for copies of any communications received respecting the resolutions passed

Chap.  
xxxiv.  
1834.