

LORD ELGIN

viduals in the rebellion," but he believed that "a great deal of property was cruelly and wantonly destroyed" in Lower Canada, and that "this government, after what their predecessors had done, and with Papineau in the rear, could not have helped taking up this question." He saw clearly that it was impossible to dissolve a parliament just elected by the people, and in which the government had a large majority. "If I had dissolved parliament," to quote his own words, "I might have produced a rebellion, but assuredly I should not have procured a change of ministry. The leaders of the party know that as well as I do, and were it possible to play tricks in such grave concerns, it would have been easy to throw them into utter confusion by merely calling upon them to form a government. They were aware, however, that I could not for the sake of discomfiting them hazard so desperate a policy; so they have played out their game of faction and violence without fear of consequences."

His reasons for not reserving the bill for the consideration of the British government must be regarded as equally cogent by every student of our system of government, especially by those persons who believe in home rule in all matters involving purely Canadian interests. In the first place, the bill for the relief of a corresponding class of persons in Upper Canada, "which was couched in terms very nearly similar, was not reserved," and it was