

of the confidence of the people as a legislature ought to command, even from those who differ from it on the questions of the day. I say this without meaning to cast any imputation on the members of the House of Assembly, because, in fact, the circumstances under which they were elected were such as to render them peculiarly objects of suspicion and reproach to a number of their countrymen. They were accused of having violated their pledges at the election. It is said that many of them came forward and were elected, as being really reformers, though opposed to any such claims of colonial independence as might involve a separation from the mother country. There seems to be no doubt that in several places, where the Tories succeeded, the electors were merely desirous of returning members who would not hazard any contest with England by the assertion of claims which, from the proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, they believed to be practically needless; and who should support Sir F. Head in those economical reforms which the country desired far more than political changes—reforms, for the sake of which alone political changes had been sought. In a number of other instances, too, the elections were carried by the unscrupulous influence of the government, and by a display of violence on the part of the Tories, who were emboldened by the countenance afforded to them by the authorities. It was stated, but I believe without any sufficient foundation, that the Government made grants of land to persons who had no title to them, in order to secure their votes. This report originated in the fact, that patents for persons who were entitled to grants, but had not taken them out, were sent down to the polling places, to be given to the individuals entitled to them, if they were disposed to vote for the government candidate. The taking such measures, in order to secure their fair right of voting to the electors in a particular interest, must be considered rather as an act of official favouritism,

than as an electoral fraud. But we cannot wonder that the defeated party put the very worst construction on acts which gave some ground for it; and they conceived in consequence, a strong resentment against the means by which they believed that the representative of the crown had carried the elections, his interference in which, in any way, was stigmatised by them as a gross violation of constitutional privilege and propriety.

It cannot be a matter of surprise that such facts and such impressions produced in the country an exasperation and a despair of good government, which extended far beyond those who had actually been defeated at the poll. For there was nothing in the use which the leaders of the Assembly have made of their power to soften the discontent excited by their alleged mode of obtaining it. Many even of those who had supported the successful candidates, were disappointed in every expectation which they had formed of the policy to be pursued by their new representatives. No economical reforms were introduced. The Assembly, instead of supporting the governor, compelled his obedience to itself, and produced no change in the administration of affairs, except that of reinstating the "family compact" in power. On some topics on which the feelings of the people were deeply engaged, as, for instance, the clergy reserves, the Assembly is accused of having shown a disposition to act in direct defiance of the known sentiments of a vast majority of its constituents. The dissatisfaction arising from these causes was carried to its height by an act that appeared in defiance of all constitutional right, to prolong the power of a majority which, it was supposed, counted on not being able to retain its existence after another appeal to the people. This was the passing an act preventing the dissolution of the existing as well as any future Assembly, on the demise of the Crown. The act was passed in expectation of the approaching decease of his late Majesty; and it has, in

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