

be different, it is vain to expect that any set of public servants who should espouse the general interests, could continue in authority.

Even in the question of peace and war, excluded alike from local legislation in the several states of America, as in the colonies, we have seen how nearly in the States of Michigan, New York, and Maine, the prevalence of popular opinion produced a terrible national war: how the arm of Government was paralyzed, and the licentious and outrageous conduct of the populace encouraged by local authorities, because of the influence of this excluded and forbidden question, upon the elections of local governors and local legislatures; and it cannot be questioned that little more exacerbation of the public mind in Upper Canada, would have caused such a desire for reprisal and retaliation, as would have placed any local responsible cabinet, desirous to maintain peace on the border, in direct collision with the popular voice.

A stronger instance of the necessity for interference in local affairs than the recommendation of the British Government for a merciful course towards the prisoners presented, could scarcely have occurred, for it has justly been observed, that the honour of England would suffer if life were taken unnecessarily. But to prevent its being taken to a much greater extent than has been permitted required much firmness in the advisers of the Government, and much reliance on their part on the Imperial Authorities for support in the humane course recommended by them.

To conclude this subject, your committee would observe, that so long as England holds sway in the colonies, there will be a majority seeking for power in the provinces, and a minority for justice and protection and impartial government. The moment the provincial magnates are made supreme by the proposed system, interference to do justice will be a breach of faith; and let it be recollected, that if England refuse the umpirage between contending parties, there is a power at hand, ready and anxious to join with either, and watching for the favourable opportunity.

From these reasonings, it appears evident, that the expenses of military defence in Canada are not to be avoided by a partial independence, or by anything short of abandonment. These expenses have not been incurred in consequence of any want of popular concessions; they have been caused by the unprincipled and outrageous conduct of the border Americans, which can only be held in check by military defences, or by the influence of British power upon the American people, through their government.

Referring to the causes of the late insurrection, your committee would observe, that it is not to be contended that the influence over the public mind, caused by Sir Francis Head having placed the question at issue in such a light as to show political evils arising from the reform system so strongly as to produce the change in the elections of 1836, could either produce or excuse rebellion. The question at issue involved consequences of vital importance; nor could the rebellion be produced or excused by comparisons made by the public, to the disadvantage of the reformers. The only pretence amongst all those urged, having any colour of argument, is the alleged corruption at the elections, and the influence then obtained by Government. But this pretext seems, upon examination, as unfounded as the others: a people who will permit themselves, in a country in which the elective franchise is so widely diffused, to be bribed or influenced into returning an overwhelming majority to parliament, are not the most likely, therefore, to rise in rebellion against their own decision; and as to the fact of corruption on the part of the Government, so far from there being any means of attempting such a course, it is with great difficulty that the Government can find the means of carrying on itself, without any such expensive interference with the rights of electors. If the assertion were not too absurd for dispute upon it, reference might be had to the returns from the public offices, and to the proceedings in the Assembly, in which the reformers were invited, in vain, to sustain any one of these accusations, as a full refutation of the charge of corrupt interference influencing the elections.

That dissatisfaction prevailed amongst the defeated party, as in all other cases, is admitted; and that the elected members did not possess the confidence of those who voted against them, was to be expected; but that the successful majority were thereby driven into despair of good government, or were discontented with their own mode of putting members of their own choice into power, is not only contradicted by the argument that the remedy would always be in their own hands, but by the fact of the enthusiastic loyalty with which the populace of the country, chiefly those who formed the majority in the late elections, rallied round the very men and the governor, by whom, according to the complaint of the reformers, they had been disappointed and betrayed. Your committee are of opinion, that the proximity of the American frontier—the wild and chimerical notions of civil government broached and discussed there—the introduction of a very great number of border Americans into this province, as settlers, who, with some most respectable and worthy exceptions, formed the bulk of the reformers, who carried these opinions so far as disaffection—together with the existence of actual rebellion, and the expectation of a general rising in Lower Canada, emboldened a portion of the minority to rise in rebellion in this province, in the hope of achieving the overthrow of the Government, with foreign assistance.

Is it because reformers, or a portion of them, can command the sympathies of the United States, and of Lower Canadian rebels, that the internal affairs of a British colony must be conducted so as to please them? Where would the colonial government have looked for support and defence in its time of real danger, had proscription and discouragement and