

States—a topic which has now assumed the very gravest importance from the announced intention of Government to withdraw her Majesty's troops from the Canadas, and thus resign them to their own wishes and resources.* There has lately been such a confusion of political parties, and there always is such a variety of interests, both moral and material, in our Canadian provinces, that it is all but impossible to arrive at a correct conclusion as to their actual condition. At this moment we dare say very few of our readers can tell how it happened that a majority of Upper Canadian members, of British blood, and many of them British born, went with the French members in the case of the portentous Indemnity Bill. How came those who had been unanimous, not a few of them gallantly active, in opposing the rebellion, to be found voting with those who had all favoured, many of them participated in it? Mr. Johnston put this question to a friend of his—one of these British members—and his explanation was to the following effect:—For a long series of years, Upper Canada was under the dominating rule of what was called the Family Compact, by which home-born Canadians and a certain number of high officials divided all posts and patronage among themselves, and did everything in their power to keep the British-born from participating in the sweets of place. The few British who gained access to the Assembly, therefore, were naturally driven into opposition, and, after the union of the Provinces, made common cause with the French Opposition to the Tory Government, till at length the numbers of the latter party exceeded those returned by the Family Compact. As a natural result the Tories were ousted, and the present mixed Government went in. In short, still fresh from the struggle, and embarrassed by their ill-assorted alliance with the French members, the British-born allowed party to triumph over principle, and voted for the *Indemnity Bill*. It may be very true that many of them 'never believed or intended that any one who had aided or promoted the rebellion should be compensated;' but there must have been others not quite so shortsighted, and whose only excuse is their awkward position. Nevertheless, but for the incredible weakness of the Government at home, we should have had no serious fear. Under any circumstances that could well have been anticipated, we should have felt confidence that

* See Correspondence relating to the Civil List of Canada (Blue Book, April, 1851) pp. 9-13—Despatch from Lord Grey, dated March 14—in which he informs Lord Elgin that, in consequence of the pleasant state of our relations with the government at Washington, it is considered needless to maintain any British force in our Provinces, except 'the garrisons of two or three fortified posts—probably only Quebec and Kingston!'