

This was the state of the case, as far as he had an opportunity of judging. He might be wrong—but he was open to receive any information, and would form his judgment accordingly. One thing, however, he would say; the Legislature of the colony was sufficient to legislate for itself; and when the Government of this country interfered, they only were to blame. One part of their interference, particularly, he thought was highly blameable—that which related to the internal affairs of the country. [hear, hear.] He would say, without fear of contradiction, that the majority in the mother country ought to have the power of enacting laws which they thought the best; and *multo fortiori*, the colonies had a still better right, as they had infinitely more means of information than a Government at several 1,000 miles distance. Nothing else can save a country from ruin than allowing the majority to make laws, and particularly those on the spot. At such a distance there was no other way of deciding the question but by leaving it to the opinion of the great majority of the people. The fault lay not with the people of Canada, but with the Government at home. If he found that scuffles and squabbles were constantly occurring in the colony, he must presume that they were against the Government. [hear, hear.] He would not charge the Government with injustice, but with imprudence, in endeavouring to legislate for a country at such a distance, without attending sufficiently to the publicly expressed opinion of the great body of the colonists. These squabbles had been going on for ten years; and this alone, he considered, was a decided proof that the government had not done their duty. He was astonished at the proposition of the Right hon. Gentleman. Were the colonists so ignorant as not to be trusted with the management of their own affairs? Was it dangerous to entrust them, being a numerous body, with the internal regulation of the country? Was it dangerous to leave to them the settlement of their own rights and privileges?—and was the Government at this distance, half so well qualified to perform the task? The fault, in short, lay not with the people of Canada. If they were at all in fault, the Government were tenfold more so. The House of Assembly had claimed the right of appropriating the supplies, and were perfectly justified in so doing.—This is a right so essential to any house of Commons, that, without it, the house might be said to be a mere delusion, and incapable of any legislative measure. The Right hon. gentleman admitted that the Legislature of Canada could appropriate certain sums—the surplus, for instance, after providing for the necessities of the colony, but could not dispose of the rest without the concurrence of government. But if this were the case, of what use was the power granted to the Legislature? If the house of Assembly grant certain sums of money, certainly they were the only individuals who had the right to take cognizance of their appropriation. This in fact was a primary principle in all legislation; that the body which voted the money, should have a controul over its expenditure. In consequence of the disputes, which had been going on for years, it appeared there was at present in the Receiver-General's hands the sum of 100,000l.; and, consequently, the rights of a great number of individuals were implicated most materially. But does the Right hon. gentleman say that it is wise to wrangle with the people? and will he not admit that it would be infinitely more wise to yield to the votes of an assembly which was almost unanimous, and which was seconded by the great body of the people. If the government go on as they have been doing, where will the business end? Every one must see that the effects of this hostility between the government and the people must terminate in alienating the colony from the Metropolitan State, and indisposing it towards the government. What can be more foolish than for any government to insist on appointing the Speaker of the Commons in opposition to the general wish of the Assembly? It certainly is an ancient usage, but a most absurd one, to ask the consent of the King to the appointment of the speaker. In a colony the case is still worse—[hear, hear]; and even in this established monarchy, the right had never been claimed but in the worst times, and by the worst of Kings.—[hear, hear.] He would not enter into the question further; but he could not disguise his sentiments, and must express his decided disapprobation of the measures of government. What but infatuation, intoxication, on the part of Government, could lead them to be guided by any other criterion than the general feeling of the people, and desert that course

which was the only safety and strength of the Colony? Why enter into squabbles with the Legislature? Why follow up St. Giles' maxim, and be determined to have the last hard word, and give the last blow? This was inconsistent with the dignity of the English Administration; and he trusted that government would see the folly of their measures, and introduce a change for the better. He observed that twenty-one bills were passed by the Lower House in 1827, all of which were more or less reformatory—all affecting the internal affairs of the country—all of them, in fact, local Acts; yet, every one of these twenty-one bills had been thrown out by the Upper Legislature.—The Upper House was to blame; the government is responsible for these measures—the Upper House is a mere tool, a mere creature of government, and consequently acts according to their direction. From the very constitution of that house every one must be convinced that this is the case. Out of twenty-seven Members, seventeen hold places at pleasure, and divide among them 15,000l. a year—no small sum in a country like Canada. Subtracting these seventeen, ten only remain to oppose the improper measures of government: but their opposition is, or rather was of no avail—they became worn out by fruitless opposition, and renounced their attendance in the house. Two of them were great landholders in the country, and had signed the petition which he had the honor to present. Under these circumstances the constitution of such a Council was a grievance. This was not the way to conciliate the colony, to raise an opposition to what might be called the Aristocracy of the country—for in every country there was a species of Aristocracy, whose wealth, opinions and influence pointed them out as guides to the rest, and as controlling members of the community. These, however, had been excluded; the great body were looked upon as slaves; and slaves, it was well known, could not counsel their masters. These were the chief grievances of which the Canadians complained. The first was the continued hostility carried on by government against the colony, and the second, the use made by the executive government of those interested individuals, to the disadvantage of the great body of the community. It had been said there was a ground made out for a change—he denied that any grounds had been proved for a change, except in this respect, that the opinions of the people ought to be more consulted, and they be left to regulate the internal affairs of the colony, as they might see best. Every Sovereign, even the most despotic, was obliged to bow to the opinion of the great majority.—It was madness to attempt to carry on any other government on other principles; and unless the government of Canada were to resort to the same principle, the result would be that their influence on the country would become every day weaker and weaker. He, therefore, would say on revising the whole question, that no other change was necessary. The evils apprehended might be prevented by a prudent administration. He would be glad to hear some distinct explanation as to the cause of the misunderstanding—anything, in fact, that could prove that all the squabbles had not arisen from the imprudence of the executive. He should wish to know what faults were to be laid to the Constitution and to the government. This was a grave question, and he thought the Right hon. gentleman ought to give more explanation on the subject before he called on the house to agree to a committee. He was bound to shew the specific evils, and prove whether they arose from the fault of the Crown, the people, or the Constitution. The people in that colony had feelings like themselves; they wished to establish their rights and privileges; and he would ask what laws had been passed in Lower Canada, which were unjust towards any sect? With regard to the revenue, was it fair that the Lower House should not have its due influence in the appropriation of it? and should 80,000 be allowed to weigh against 400,000—the population of the country? The great body in Canada were the landed proprietors, and their interests, above all, ought to be consulted. At Quebec and Montreal there were a considerable number of English who filled offices, civil as well as military, and many of them, no doubt, were most respectable; but certainly they ought not to legislate for the great body of the settlers. No measure, he thought, ever could be successful which had not for its object the cordial union of the original settlers and the welfare of the majority of the people. He would not object to any measures that might be

judged necessary for protecting the English, but he would protest against any system which should separate them from the original settlers: and should, above all things, regret any symptoms emanating from home, to treat the latter as a favoured cast.—[hear, hear.] We have had enough of legislation of that kind in our English Colonies; legislation tending only to serve one party, and injure the other—to maintain distinction and privileges which on the whole, are injurious to all; and which, as it has been acted upon in some of our colonies, and particularly in Ireland, has brought on the most unhappy consequences. We have borne the dishonour, and Ireland all the misery. [hear, hear.] In the name of God! let an end be put to such a system, and let us all be ruled by equal laws. The inhabitants of Canada were not less the subjects of the King than the English, and why should they not have the same rights and privileges? Why should they not be permitted to legislate for themselves, and appropriate the supplies as they are appropriated by the National Assembly of the mother country? They were all his majesty's subjects and it was the duty of the government to treat them as such; to consult their feelings, and above all, to make no distinction between those of French and English extraction, or to give any thing like a colour to the notion that they were two distinct bodies of men. Let the majority decide what they consider best, and the other party could not complain. Give them in the words of Pitt, "the shield of their rights—the means of choosing for themselves, and thereby securing their civil and religious rights." No course but this can put an end to the discontent which prevails, and which, if it be not soothed very soon, will destroy our possessions in that country. Above all, he would say, let all distinctions of races be annihilated, and her people be treated as free born English subjects. With regard to Upper Canada, the statement of the Right hon. gentleman was not more satisfactory than on the other points to which he alluded. He had merely proposed that an inquiry should take place; but, in common sense, ought it to take place without some prospect being held out that it would end in some good? It would have been better, therefore, if the Right hon. gentleman had thrown out some grounds for a new plan of government. He had, however, recommended none, but merely condemned the existing institutions in both the Canadas, as if his great object were to take them by surprise. This he should consider a most unjust mode of proceeding. In 1822, the Union of the two legislative bodies was proposed, and he was proud to reflect that he had opposed the measure, and was effectual in his opposition. This might have sweetened the ill-humour of Lower Canada; but it would have had a different effect on the other, and would, in fact, only have tended to have made two foes instead of one. The best way to put an end to discontent was to make no distinction between Catholics and Protestants—to establish juries in their full extent—secure the liberty of the press, and grant the Colonies the right claimed by the mother country. The Right hon. Gent. had alluded to a plan for separating the English settlers from the rest, for the purpose of facilitating the commerce with England. Against such a measure he would not decidedly protest, at least as far as he understood the proposal, because the result probably would be, that both countries would be discontented, and we should have the two Legislatures joining against us. He did not really understand, or see his way into the issue of this plan. He thought the wisest measure which this government could adopt would be the prudent selection of a wise and able governor, who would consult with the wiser and better portions of the different societies in the Canadas, as their mutual interests. He should bring the heads of the classes together, and cement the union of their interests, by endeavouring to bring them with good humour towards each other. Having consulted those persons, it would be his duty to acquiesce in the opinions of the majority of that body. He could not understand the regulations as respected the Colleges. He had heard, with astonishment, that the professors of those Colleges were obliged to subscribe to the thir-nine articles, before they could preside in the various departments—[hear, hear.] By this law, Mr. Adam Smith would have been prevented from filling the chair of political economy, and Dr. Black would have been equally debarred from filling the chair of Chemistry; and so would all the great men who, in the last century, had adorned the paths of