

The Examiner.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY, WHEN FREEBORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC, MAY SPEAK FREE."—EURIPIDES.

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PARTY GOVERNMENT.

For the instruction of a few individuals in Charlottetown, who are always ready to set their faces against any improvement whatever on the old system of Government, we republish from the Halifax Recorder the following eloquent and able observations on the advantages of forming a Government from amongst men of one party only, whichever has the ascendancy in the Legislature, instead of putting men of all shades of politics into situations that afford the greatest facility and temptation to practice fraud and duplicity and to set one official plotting and intriguing against another. The day is fast approaching when the principles so fully enounced by "Laicus Wesleyensis" will not only be better understood on this Island than they are at present, but will be found as necessary to the efficient discharge of governmental duties here as in any other of the British Possessions.

[From the Acadian Recorder.]

TO THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA.
DEAR BRETHREN,—

Among the very many senseless cries which the Conservatives have poured into the popular ear, none has found a louder voice than the "no-party government" cry. Notwithstanding the incessant vapouring of the Tory press respecting the Conservative interest in this province, the Conservatives were perfectly aware that the majority of the constituency was opposed to their measures and public rule; and so, preparing for the defeat which they foresaw was not to be evaded, they raised their watchword of no-party government, that they might still sway the destinies of the state, though they should lose the confidence of the people. The manner in which the Tories presented the administration of government by a party, to your notice, evinced the most contemptible ignorance of the true nature of representative self-government, or the most inveterate hatred of it. In either case they deserve not your confidence.

Draw near, my brethren, while I unveil to you the mysteries of Party Government, of which the Tories would have you stand so deeply in dread. Party Government is the government of a whole people through the majority of their representatives; it is the governing by the largest party for all parties. And to ensure the success of the measures of which the greater proportion approve, it is requisite that the able men, who originate and sustain them, should be the responsible advisers of the Crown, that they may give an effective utterance to the wishes of the people, and a faithful execution to them, when embodied in law.

It is never intended by the British Constitution, that the executive power of the state should have interests distinct from the legislative power thereof, or that the law executing part should stand in collision with the law-making portion of government.

To prevent this state of things from arising, the people of Britain have determined, that the legal and constitutional advisers of the Crown shall be taken from that party in the state which, by the test of the electoral voice, has the confidence and support of the nation at large. As long as those advisers retain the confidence and support of the representatives of the people, the Crown must act in accordance with the will of the nation; and thus is harmony preserved between the different branches of the Government and the people.

Now, if the advisers of the Sovereign were to be taken from the minority of the representatives and the people; then, according to the working of the constitution, the Crown would be in a state of antagonism with the chief branch of the Legislature, and altogether powerless for good. On the other hand, if the Council of the Sovereign were made up of the able men of all parties commingled, the Executive would not be able to command the confidence of any party; for if the Crown should take the advice of the minority in prefer-

ence or opposition to that of the majority, then the confidence of the majority would be withheld, not only from the Crown, but likewise from the men who represented it in the Cabinet of the Sovereign; unless they were to resign office and pass into opposition.

But if the advice of the agents of the majority, in all important proceedings, were to be invariably acted upon, for what service would the agents of the minority be reserved? They could bring their monarch no support—they could harmonize no action between the Crown and the Commons—and they would be sources of weakness to the former, and objects of suspicion to the latter. Nor is this all—for between the conflicts and jealousies of a Coalition Cabinet there would be a danger lest that the Sovereign, who might at first find himself bewildered to know what to do, should at last come to play off one party against another, and thus centralize in his own person all the important powers of Government, without any available check upon his actions, and then he might enact the despot under the forms of representative institutions.

You will not fail to perceive, my brethren, that by the simple contrivance of surrounding the Sovereign with men who have the cordial support and confidence of the people's representatives, there is given to the Executive and Legislative departments of Government oneness of sentiment, unity of action, and vigour of performance—to the people confidence in their public servants, as well as power to punish them—and to the Crown itself the love and respect of all, the fear and hatred of none. And this simple, but most wise arrangement, is the very essence of party government. Is it a thing so terrible as to affright you?

Party Government has been the prevailing mode of administration, with the occurrence of a few interruptions, ever since the accession of William the Third. Need I pause to demand whether the liberties and prosperity of England under the despotism of the wretched Stuarts bear any sort of comparison to the increasing freedom, happiness, and power of Britain, under the constitutional party government of the Stuarts' successors? How happens it that Victoria travels in every part of our ancestral land in such peace and safety?—so much so that whenever she plunges either among the islets of England's sea-girt coast, or scales the mountain cliffs of ancient Caledonia, she finds herself every where engirdled by the living heart and blessing lips; while for her health and happiness there goeth up to the King of Kings from the shrine of the sanctuary and the altar of the heart, the mingled supplications of all parties and of all creeds? I will tell you why this atmosphere of blessedness breatheth around her, and this sacrifice is lifted heavenward. It is because that under her sway Party Government giveth power to the people, but love to the Crown.

But you have been told that Party Government is partial and oppressive. In answer to this objection, let me ask you to turn your attention to the definition and explanation of the working of this mode of administration which I have already given you; and then remember, that it exists altogether by the sufferance and countenance of the people, and hence that it will be the interest of the men who conduct such a Government to act with perfect fairness and integrity; for as their acts must pass in revision before the public eye, should they be of a nature to call down the public condemnation, that government must perish. And, therefore, Party Government makes it the worldly wisdom and worldly interest of its members to be just and free.

Yet, it may still be objected, that it would be unwise and unjust to deprive the occupants of the minor public offices of their emoluments and position, upon every change of an administration. To this, I beg to say, that if, upon the accession of a new party to power, every government office in the state were to be placed at the disposal, and given to the occupancy, of the new

party, even then, the advantages of party government are so great and manifold, that they would far outweigh the higher disadvantages attendant upon its working. Besides, no man is compelled to seek a state office. When a man turns to any of the ordinary pursuits of human life, he does it, as do all his fellows, at the risk of failing therein. He that takes the emoluments of public office, must do it at the risk of losing them. But there is a check to the unnecessary exercise of the power of ejection from office: for example—suppose that upon the entrance of a new party into the Cabinet, all the minor offices throughout the land should be declared to be vacant, and that, forthwith, they should be filled up with mere party men, what would be the result? Why, such a proceeding would awaken a storm of universal indignation, and the party guilty of it should at once be shorn of half its strength: and it is the fear of such retribution which will prevent the ejection of honest quiet men from office, when their retention of it would not embarrass the proper action of the Government.

Still, perhaps, you imagine that Party Government would doom you to ceaseless agitation. Now, my brethren, where ever a free government exists, there you will find unceasing agitation, or the conflict of thought, opinion and argument. You must have untrammelled public discussion, or you may have private assassination. You must have a free press, or you will have dark dungeons and heavy chains. The blackened pen is better than the bloody sword. It is better to waste ink than to pour out the life blood. It is cheaper, as well as somewhat more peaceable, to reason than to fight, and in all probability, should you be in the right, you would find it an easier task to convince than to kill. A free government stands vastly more in need of independent voters than of red coated soldiers or noisy cannon; but if you will not have the roar of artillery, you must put up with the cant of politicians.

But, my dear brethren, how is it that while movement and competition help every other pursuit so greatly, they prove themselves so baneful to liberty and good government? The competition of human skill, of lofty science, and of adventurous commerce, has made man only less than a Creator; for he can now construct almost everything, but a human brain, and a human soul. Look you abroad upon your sister country, and behold how, upon her sea coast, and lake side, and river bank, there spring up cities, gorgeous with the architecture of the eastern world, and crowded with the wealth of every clime. Competition is the rod which hath smitten the rocks in those western wilds, and peopled their once dreary solitudes with happy life. Give us that competition; and there will be brought to the service of the people, the highest talent, the most comprehensive mind, and the most enterprising effort. Such a government will magnetize the people with its own spirit; and then with a consciousness of their own resources, a reliance upon themselves, with a trust in Providence, they will lift the gauntlet thrown at their feet, by their Anglo-American brethren, and they will acquit themselves in a way worthy of their origin and destiny. My brethren, you have nothing to fear from agitation. Water is never so still as when it is frozen, but I suspect never so useless as when in that state.

None of the subjects of the empire can ultimately prevent the inhabitants of these Colonies from possessing such a Government as I have sketched. The integrity of the Empire, the well being of the Colonies, and the designs of Heaven alike demand its introduction. It cannot with safety be denied. There are men among us, whom, for clearness of thought, steadiness of purpose, and indomitable energy, the Empire at large cannot surpass. These men have the confidence of the people; they must be the advisers of the Crown.

No private intrigue, no cajolement in high places, no blandness of speech, Parisian bows, or wreathed smiles,