

The Examiner.

AND SEMI-WEEKLY INTELLIGENCER.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY WHEN FREE-BORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC—MAY SPEAK FREE."—MILTON'S EURIPIDES.

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HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 30th April.

HOUSE IN COMMITTEE ON THE STATE OF THE COLONY.

(Debate continued.)

Mr. MONTGOMERY wished to know what was to follow the adoption of the Resolution. Was it intended to follow it up by another Address to Her Majesty the Queen? In his opinion, the House ought to wait until they had received an answer to the Address already sent home to Her Majesty, before they agreed to a second resolution. When the answer should be received, if found favourable to the views and wishes of the House, they would have all that they required from the Royal Authority for the furtherance of their object, and, he thought, the proper course would be to await the receipt of an answer; for, in the absence of one, he could not see how it would be possible for the House to act upon the resolution should they adopt it.

Hon. Mr. PALMER.—He had listened patiently fully an hour and a half by the clock, while the honorable member for Queen's County (Mr. Coles) had delivered himself of a stream of words, in adding calumny to calumny against his Excellency the Lieut. Governor, and constituting what he supposed must be called a speech. He (Hon. Mr. Palmer) did not intend to notice all the malevolent allegations brought forward by that honorable member against his Excellency the Lieut. Governor. It would be derogatory to the character of his Excellency to suppose that his detractor had obtained that degree of credence with the House, which would render it necessary to reply, by denial or refutation, to one-half, three-fourths, or even seven-eighths of his silly charges and complaints, if even true, in depreciation of the character of Sir Donald Campbell. The leader of the majority (Mr. Coles) and his immediate assistants, had, he believed, been busily engaged for the last three or four months, in the collection of materials whereon to base a resolution of want of confidence in his Excellency; but, not having found such materials quite as abundant as they wished them to be, they had been obliged, reluctantly, to forego that project, and to content themselves with the less daring, but sufficiently vindictive resolutions which they were then prepared to carry. These were, in all probability, intended to be the precursors of their crowning production—a vote of want of confidence in his Excellency—but, although they had been compelled, from the want of proper materials, to abandon their ultimate object, and were hopeless of effecting anything in furtherance of their designs, by the carrying of the three resolutions which had been introduced to the notice of the committee, yet, being pregnant with them, they could not deny themselves the poor satisfaction of being, even abortively, delivered of them. The mover of the first resolution had admitted, that the dissatisfaction of himself and his friends, up to the time of their moving and carrying a resolution of want of confidence in the Government, had been with the Government or Executive Council, and not with the Governor; and it was clear that, if, by the carrying of that resolution, they had effected a complete change in the Government, his Excellency would have been, in their estimation, all that a Governor ought to be—blessed with the very best of tempers, the kindest disposition, the clearest judgment, and the most independent mind—gentle and courteous in speech and manners, truly liberal in his sentiments and politics, and utterly incapable of conceiving an untruth. But, in the remarkable speech they had just heard delivered by the leader of the majority, his Excellency was, on the contrary, denounced with the utmost rancour; he was represented as most irascible, as tyrannical in his disposition and practice, as erring and unjustly biased in judgment, as swayed by a few for their individual benefit, and altogether unfit to govern the people of this colony. He (Mr. Coles) had been so profuse in his aspersions of his Excellency, that no one, he (Hon. Mr. P.) thought, would be able to recollect all the particulars of his abuse, unless he had noted them down; and that would, indeed, have been labor ill-bestowed, for they contained nothing that was worthy either of record or remembrance. There were, however, one or two things which he had said, that he (Hon. Mr. P.) would condescend to notice. He (Mr. Coles) had told them of his having raised a hornets' nest about his ears, by certain of his proceedings, in which he seemed greatly to pride himself; and, in his relation of which, he figured as a hero. But he (Hon. Mr. P.) thought it would have been much better for himself if he had left that episode quite out of his extravagant and abusive harangue. By it, he had established nothing to the prejudice of those against

whom it was levelled; but it was, indeed, most detrimental to himself, as showing him to be so blindly malevolent, that he could not even conceal from the public eye the corrupt and poisoned sources of the false and reckless accusations, by the means of which he hoped to open the doors of power, place, and emolument, to himself and his eager and hungry friends. It had, in truth, been both amusing and disgusting to witness the vulgar confidence and the assumption of indisputable authority, with which the unfounded accusations were preferred. The hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Coles) seemed to think that, in finding a certain passage in the Royal Instructions, he had made a discovery which would prove very valuable to himself and his party in the prosecution of their designs. In stumbling upon something in the Royal Instructions which has always been there, he (hon. Mr. P.) could not perceive that he had found any just or sufficient cause for exultation. The passage or article merely authorized the Governor to fill up any vacancy or vacancies in his Council which might accidentally occur; but it gave him no authority or licence to make an entire re-construction of it, at his own free will or pleasure; and was very far indeed from warranting the construction put upon it by the hon. member for Queen's County and his followers. They said he had never asked his Excellency to establish Responsible Government, that all they had required of him was a re-construction of his Council, and that they had not even asked for a single office. It might be true that they had not, in express terms, demanded the establishment of Responsible Government; but who was so blind as not to perceive that, in insisting upon having the Council entirely composed of themselves—the leaders and other members of their party—they aimed at nothing short of the assumption of the whole powers of the Government; and that, had they succeeded, those powers would quickly have been exercised by the displacing of old and respected public servants, and the appointment of themselves and their friends in their stead. The offer made by his Excellency to admit three of the liberal party into the Executive Council, had been treated as a subterfuge and a mockery, by the member for Queen's County (Mr. Coles); but there were in the Council men called Liberals, who would say that his Excellency would not have been justified by circumstances in an entire re-construction of his Government, and that the offer of three Seats at the Executive Board to the Liberals, by his Excellency, ought to have been received by them as a pledge of his willingness to re-construct his Council, wholly with regard to the principles of Responsible Government, in case he should be authorized to do so by the Home Government. The truth was that, in making that offer, His Excellency had graciously manifested a willingness to gratify the Liberals by a concession of all that he could be justified in yielding to them, whilst the question concerning the establishment of Responsible Government should remain undetermined; all the endeavours of the hon. member for Queen's County (Mr. Coles) and his party to prove the contrary would be utterly in vain. They had even gone so far with respect to one office—which, amongst their own ranks they had no one competent to fill—as to say to the present incumbent of it—in the hope of gaining him over to their cause, and of adding to it the weight and influence of his character, abilities, and experience, in order to lessen their present great and notorious deficiencies in that respect—that provided he would only act as they wished him to do, they would not seek to eject him from his office, but, on the contrary, would willingly and gladly retain him in it. Was not this single fact sufficient to show that, at the time of their making that proposal, they were in imagination, what they desired to be in reality,—the Government, and the disposers of all official place, honour, and emolument in the Colony? They were at length, however, unwillingly beginning to perceive that they had been aiming too high and seeking too much. They were beginning to see that her Majesty would support her Representative in the Colony, in his just and constitutional refusal to submit to the dictation of a set of political speculators, and rapacious, and needy demagogues, and in betrayal of his trust to divest himself, as it were, at their solicitation, of all the powers of his Office, and to place them in their hands; and they were then endeavouring to throw dust in the eyes of the people, and to render them blind to the unscrupulous selfishness of their characters and views, by saying that all that they wanted was a re-construction of the Executive Council. Amongst the many accusations preferred against his Excellency by the hon. member for Queen's County (Mr. Coles) there was one concerning desertion from the garrison, which, perhaps, required an answer. (He (hon. Mr. P.)

did not, however, intend to justify his Excellency's having, on account of the frequency of desertions here, sent away, or caused to be withdrawn a part of the detachment stationed here. When all the circumstances connected with that step of his Excellency's were taken into account, it would be evident that on account of the responsibility which he had taken upon himself by causing, through his representations to Sir John Harvey, a considerable increase to be made in the number of troops stationed here, it was natural that he should be anxious to discharge himself from that responsibility, when experience proved to him that desertion among the troops was really in greater proportion here than in any other Colony, and that representations to that effect were sent home from the officer commanding in the garrison, one consequence of which was to place Sir Donald Campbell in no very enviable position with respect to the military authorities at home; for it was owing to the representation made by Sir Donald, that desertions were not more frequent here than elsewhere, that an addition was made to the number of men usually stationed here. Was it to be wondered at then, that, when facts were at variance with that representation, his Excellency would seek to relieve himself from the responsibility which had devolved upon him through his having procured that addition to be made; and that he should, consequently, cause the number in garrison to be reduced to the former complement? They had heard three or four silly observations about his Excellency having sent the Sergeant at Arms—an Officer not known to exist in connection with the Executive Council—to compel the attendance, at the Executive Board, of two or three recusant members of his Council, when it was their privilege, if they thought proper to avail themselves of it, to absent themselves for six months without being liable to censure or question for their prolonged non-attendance. With respect to the Resolutions submitted to the Committee, they were to be regarded as a mere abortion. They were, he believed, at first intended to lead to the adoption of a Resolution expressive of a want of confidence in his Excellency, but the good sense of some of the party had, no doubt, suggested the "discretion was sometimes the better part of valour," and the rest, with all their folly, had prudence enough left to take the benefit of the hint. The charges which he (Mr. Coles) had brought forward against his Excellency had been preferred in a manner sufficiently indicative of the disappointment, spleen, and malice in which they had had their source; but, in themselves, they were so frivolous, so absurd, and unsubstantial, even with all the studied exaggeration with which they had been heightened, that the only damage which they could effect would be to the individual who had detailed them.

[Debate to be concluded in our next.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM MR. COLES IN REPLY TO THE GAZETTE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER.

Sir:

I do not believe it is necessary I should notice the editorial remarks in last Tuesday's *Gazette*, in reference to my speech, or to those parts of it which referred to the conduct of the Lieutenant Governor, further than to say—that it is evident His Excellency has an extremely bad case, or a very miserable advocate in the Editor of the *Gazette*, when, out of a multitude of allegations brought against him, two alone are, or seemingly could be, questioned; and those two the least important of all. As to the *Gazette's* denial of the two facts referred to, namely, His Excellency's ill-treatment of a member of the Government House Committee, and his rude conduct towards the Deputation entrusted with the Petition praying that the Steamer *Rose* might be prevented from running on Sunday,—I beg further to observe that a mere denial is no proof to the reverse of what I have asserted, and that as my credibility has never been destroyed by my being compelled at the dictation of any Governor to publish myself a propagator of false and unauthorized statements, I have no fear that my testimony to the truth of any fact will be shaken by the loose assertion of a Journal that is just as ready to do dirty work for the present Governor as it was for a former one.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

GEORGE COLES.

Charlottetown, June 14, 1850.