

AND WHEREAS, This House on the 19th day of March, 1846, having proceeded to the consideration of the said Despatch, did among others adopt the Resolutions following: "Resolved, that this House humbly tenders its dutiful and most grateful acknowledgments to Her Majesty, for the kind and gracious interest which Her Majesty has deigned to evince for the honour and respectability of this Branch of the Provincial Legislature.

RESOLVED, "That this House highly valuing the increased stability which Her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon the Legislative Council, the members of that body humbly express their thanks to Her Majesty, for a measure gratifying to them, and in their opinion so beneficial to the country."

AND WHEREAS, Previously to the date of the passing of these Resolutions, the principles of Responsible Government had been introduced into the Province, and the members of the then Executive Government in both Branches of the Legislature, had publicly declared their policy to be in conformity with, and based upon these principles.

AND WHEREAS, There are sound reasons for believing that the public Acts of the Legislative Council command the confidence of the Representatives of the people of this Province—a people whose loyalty to their Sovereign is a principle, and whose respect for British Institutions increase with the enjoyment.

AND WHEREAS, The House of Assembly and Legislative Council of this Province, have hitherto since the introduction of Responsible Government therein, conducted the public business with all the harmony essential to sound legislation.

AND WHEREAS, It would be subversive of all principles of sound Government, to alter the Constitution of a Country at every change of an Executive Administration.

RESOLVED THEREFORE, That it is at present inexpedient to apply to Her Majesty, to remodel the Legislative Council.

On the question being put from the Chair Mr. McCully's amendment was affirmed 11 to 9.

For the amendment,—Hon. Solicitor General, Receiver General, Messrs. McCully, Bell, Brown, Grigor, Rudolf, McKeen, Campbell, Stairs, and the President.

Against it,—Messrs. Almon, Morton, Fairbanks, Keith, Chrichton, Pineo, Black, Harris, Cutler.

TELEGRAPH TO ENGLAND!—It has been proposed to the United States Congress to connect Halifax with the west coast of Ireland by Electric Telegraph. This is to be accomplished by means of a cable extended between these two points, along the Banks of Newfoundland, which, it is stated, extend to within 160 miles of the Irish coast. The estimated cost is from three to four millions.

STATE OF THE COLONY.

It will be remembered that a few days previous to the close of the late Session a Committee was appointed by the House of Assembly to correspond with a Society recently established in London for the Reform of Colonial Government, on matters relating to the general interests of this Island. The Committee consists of the following gentlemen:—George Coles, Esq., Chairman—W. W. Lord, Benjamin Davies, Edward Whelan, Esquires, and his Honor the Speaker.

The attention of the House was called to the existence of the Society by Mr. Coles in one of his speeches during the Responsible Government Debate, when he read the following prospectus of the Society, taken from a London Paper:—

THE SOCIETY FOR THE REFORM OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT.

THE COUNCIL.

The Hon. Francis Baring, M. P., Chairman.
C. B. Adderley, Esquire, M. P., R. Cobden, Esquire, M. P., The Right Hon. J. M. Gibson, M. P., M. J. Higgins, Esquire, E. Horsman, Esquire, M. P., J. Hume, Esquire, M. P., The Lord Kinaird, The Lord Lyttelton, F. A. McGeachy, Esquire, Sir W. Molesworth, Bart., M. P., J. Napier, Esquire, M. P., J. Roebuck, Esquire, M. P., The Hon. Francis Scott, M. P., H. Ker Porter, Esquire, M. P., J. Simeon, Esquire, M. P., Augustus Stafford, Esquire, M. P., S. H. Walpole, Esquire, M. P., The Lord Wodehouse.

ADDRESS BY THE COUNCIL TO THE PUBLIC OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE COLONIES.

This Society has been formed for the following reasons:—Because the inhabitants of the British Colonies are suffering under grievous misgovernment, their interests have been neglected, their enterprise checked, and their property wasted.

They are heavily and needlessly taxed, and their public Revenues have been extensively misapplied and squandered.

A heavy and unnecessary burden is imposed on the United Kingdom for their government and protection.

Their great natural resources are not adequately developed, and especially the disposal of their waste lands is grossly mismanaged.

Emigration is obstructed, to the detriment both of the mother country and the colonies; and unnatural limits are thereby imposed to the interchange of home and colonial manufactures and produce.

They are wronged and degraded by being made, against their will, receptacles for the convicted criminals of the mother country.

Notwithstanding the promises which have been made, year by year, there is no assured prospect of an effectual improvement in the present system of colonial policy, and the colo-

nists, having neither representatives in the Imperial Parliament, nor, for the most part, representative institutions in their several countries, are without constitutional means of effecting such reform.

The spirit of discontent and disaffection which, for the want of such reform, is spreading in many of the colonies, threatens their disruption from the British Empire.

The Council are of opinion that these evils are mainly owing to the great central power of the Colonial office, placed at a distance from the countries which it governs, of necessity ill-informed as to their condition and interests, and irresponsible to those whose affairs it administers.

That this authority is of recent origin, is irreconcilable with the habits of the English people, and is repugnant to the principles of our Constitution. In all the earlier colonies of England, legislatures were established, one estate of which, at least, was wholly elected by the people; nor was it ever within the prerogative of the Crown to establish any other system of Government, or to make laws or impose taxes except by the free consent of the people.

That it is not to be expected that British subjects in the colonies will long submit to be deprived of those constitutional rights which their forefathers in this country most jealously defended from the encroachment of arbitrary power.

That the absence of representative Government in the colonies has been marked by a repression of energy, a waste of resources, and a growth of discontent, except only where corrupt submission has been produced by the influence of extravagant Imperial expenditure.

That English colonists have ever thriven best when left to manage their own affairs from their first landing on their adopted shores; and that, with this local independence, they united a warm and loyal attachment to the mother country; whilst a desire for separation has always originated in vexatious Imperial interference.

That they have ever desired to obtain institutions resembling those of our own country, and they are both ready and able to provide for the expense of their own Government when their public Revenue shall be left under their own control.

The Council are therefore of opinion that it is right and expedient to delegate to all the British colonies whose population has been mainly formed, or is still being augmented, by emigration from this country, full authority to administer their own affairs.

That the colonies which are at present entitled to self-government are the North American colonies, the South African colonies, the Australian colonies, Van Dieman's Land, and New Zealand. To these colonies the Council have determined to limit their operations in the first instance. They, therefore, abstain for the present from offering any opinion as to the government of those dependencies in which the mass of the population is composed of the coloured races, such as the West India Islands, Mauritius, and Ceylon; and they consider that military stations, such as Malta, Gibraltar, &c., ought not to be considered colonies and need not necessarily be governed as such.

In respect to the mode in which the Council intend to act, they desire in the first instance to place themselves in direct communication with all the colonies above named, so that they may possess the earliest and most correct information respecting them. For this purpose they especially invite each of these colonies to appoint an Agent, resident in London, accredited to the Council, upon whom they may rely for a full and faithful representation of the affairs and wishes of the colonies.

The Council will meet once a week at least during the Session of Parliament, to determine on a course of action in respect to matters brought under their notice.

It will be the chief concern of the Council to procure the passing of general Acts of Parliament in which the principles of this Address, respecting the government of the colonies, shall be fully recognized. But it will also be their care to watch narrowly all proceedings by which the interests of British colonies may be in any manner affected; and, either by notice in Parliament, or by representation to the Government, to obtain the redress of any special grievances which may be brought before them, as well by the inhabitants of those colonies upon which their attention is immediately concentrated as by those the general consideration of whose government the Council are compelled for the present to postpone.

It is also in contemplation to extend, by publications or otherwise, a correct knowledge of the Government of the British colonies, of the real grievances of which they complain, and of the remedies which they justly demand.

The Council desire, in conclusion, to express their warm sympathy in the fortunes and interests of their fellow subjects in every part of the Colonial Empire: their conviction of the deep importance to this country of her vast Colonial possessions, as opening wide fields for commercial enterprise; as providing for the unlimited increase of population; as being the germ of nations by whom the language, the institutions, and the religion of Britons will be extended and preserved; and their firm belief that the principles they profess, and the measures they are about to propose, will tend to increase the prosperity, the stability, and the unity of the British Empire.

With the principles and the objects herein expressed, the Council of the Society for the Reform of Colonial Government now confidently appeal to the public, both at home and in the colonies, for that active co-operation and support which will enable them to carry their views into effect.

By order of the Council.

JAMES EDWARD FITZGERALD.

G. Charing-cross, Jan. 29. Secretary.

P. S.—All Communications may be addressed to the Secretary, but none will be received of which the postage is not paid. Any person may become a member of the Society upon the payment of a subscription of one pound every year.

On the 14th inst., the Hon. the Speaker, by direction of the Assembly, addressed a Letter to the Secretary of the above Society, of which the following is a transcript:—

Charlottetown, P. E. Island, March 14, 1850.

J. E. FITZGERALD Esq.,

Sir—

I am directed by the House of Assembly of P. E. Island to forward to you, to be laid before the Society of which you are Secretary, Copies of certain communications betwixt the Assembly, the Lieut. Governor and Earl Grey, numbered respectively 1, 2, 3, & 4, which I have to request you to submit to the Society.

Should there be time previous to the weekly meeting of the Society to submit them to the particular consideration of some of those gentlemen most conversant with the interests and politics of the North American Colonies, I request you will do so.

The procedure of the House this-Session, up to this

date, it is, at present, unnecessary to detail. The extract from Earl Grey's Despatch, transmitted this day to the Assembly, conceding Responsible Government, will of course be rendered final by Her Majesty's assent being given to the Act to be transmitted by the Legislature of this Colony. When that sanction is given, it is believed there will not be any present need for soliciting the intervention of the Society.

Lest, however, any untoward event might mar that most desirable arrangement, the papers before referred to are forwarded, not as requiring any present action on the part of that liberal and enlightened body, but as a means of information in case their counsel and support should become necessary. Mr. Hume, one of the Committee, took a deep and active interest in the affairs of this Colony in 1840, 1841, and 1842, and refused any acknowledgment. To intrude on him again is not the intention of the Assembly; but from him much information may be obtained in case the public interests of this Island should remain in an unsettled state.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedt. Servt.

ALEXANDER RAE, Speaker.

The Corresponding Committee met on Thursday last, and prepared the following Letter, which they transmitted to the Secretary of the Reform Society—by the English Mail that left Charlottetown at four o'clock that day:—

LETTER,

ON THE AFFAIRS OF THE ISLAND, AND IN REPLY TO HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH.

ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE REFORM OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT.

SIR—

The Undersigned having been appointed a Committee by the House of Assembly, of Prince Edward Island, to communicate with Your Society on matters affecting the interests of the Colony, with a view of having the same brought under the notice of the Honorable the House of Commons, trusting that thro' the interference of that powerful Body the inhabitants of Prince Edward Island may obtain the removal of those grievances of which they complain, and the eradication of which, in common with those of other Colonies, they are happy to perceive it is your object to accomplish,—now beg to solicit the attention of your Society to a series of circumstances which have arisen since the date of the communication addressed to you by the Speaker of the House of Assembly, on the 14th March instant.

The Speaker has already informed you of the declaration of want of confidence on the part of the House of Assembly in the Executive Council of the Island, and the communication to the Lieutenant Governor, by the Secretary of State for the Colonies of a confidential Despatch, in which the principles of Responsible Government are held to be conceded to the Colony. On the publication of an extract from this Despatch, the Members of the Executive resigned their seats therein—two of that Body being Members of the House of Assembly,—three, Members of the Legislative Council, and the remaining four, being Officers of Government, unconnected with the Legislature. At the request of the Lieutenant Governor, the House of Assembly then stayed the proceedings contemplated by them, on passing the vote of want of confidence; and two Members of the majority, possessing the confidence of their party, and one Member of the Legislative Council of the same politics, were invited to wait upon His Excellency to make, as they were induced to suppose, the necessary arrangements for the formation of a new Government. In the interview which thereafter took place between the Lieutenant Governor and these gentlemen, His Excellency required the following conditions to be complied with, before a new Council could be appointed, viz:—a permanent provision for the Chief Justice, satisfactory to that Officer—and pensions of two hundred pounds a year, each, to the Treasurer and Provincial Secretary. The gentlemen conducting the conference consulted with their party respecting these conditions, when they were authorized to inform His Excellency that a provision for the Judge was agreed upon, satisfactory to that Officer; and instead of pensions to the other two individuals named by His Excellency, it was agreed that those gentlemen might hold Offices equal to the amount claimed as pensions; and further, that the majority were willing to allow the gentleman holding the Office of Attorney General, to continue in that office, provided he retained his place in the Legislative Council, and would not factiously oppose the new Government.

In these arrangements the Governor expressed his hearty concurrence at the time; but in a subsequent interview His Excellency refused to remodel the Executive Council, until he advised with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, offering, however, at the same time, three seats at the Board to gentlemen of the Responsible Government party. This offer was, of course, refused, because its acceptance would be an abandonment of the principles on which the party took their stand—a disregard of the vote of the Assembly; and because the three gentlemen, had they accepted the offer of seats, could not defend in the Legislature the general policy of a Government wherein their poli-