

CANADA.

to the conclusion that the Bill was one that ought to be supported; he did not regret the vote he gave upon that occasion, because he thought it was just, and proper and equitable that those who had sustained just losses in Lower Canada should be paid as well as those in Upper Canada. At the time of the disturbances in 1837, when the connexion with Great Britain was threatened, he (Mr. Notman) turned out under the gallant knight from Hamilton, for the purpose of maintaining that connexion, and whenever the question of separation should arise in this country, he would be found as in 1836 and 1837, decidedly opposed to it. He had no wish to discuss the question whether the Ministry should have provided against the events of the 25th April. No one could have supposed that an attack of that kind was to be made on people engaged in the peaceable discharge of their duty. All had the right to exercise the liberty of opinion; but none to carry it to the extent of open violence against the law, and to the destruction of property. He felt that those who had countenanced these acts, would, when they had leisure, deeply repent them, and feel that the disgrace inflicted on the city was one that time could never efface. Why charge Ministers with neglect? The occurrence was the work of a moment: ten minutes only had honourable members left the building, when that building was in flames, before it was possible to obtain protection from the civil or military force. Had any man previously moved an adjournment on account of the danger, he would have been laughed at, and would have been told that we were living under the protection of British laws. Did the House suppose that that meeting was composed of the low rabble—of the scum of the city? Unfortunately there was reason to fear that it was got up by inducements from higher quarters, where such conduct was not looked for; from persons who never intended such a calamity; but who got up the excitement under which that act was committed, which must be deplored by all well-ordered minds to the last moment of their lives. He did not mean to accuse the honourable member for Hamilton of any adhesion to the principles of annexation; but it was certain that papers published in the interest of the honourable member's party had argued in favour of it; and that the letters which had appeared in the "Hamilton Spectator" were written by a Mr. W. B. Wilson, a gentleman who always belonged to the Conservative party. If such aims could be accomplished, the colony would have passed from great to greater evils. We would be under a system of taxation that would be most burdensome; our influence would be but as a speck, instead of being as now a great colony favoured by England above all others, and protected from insult by her powerful arm. In the present deplorable condition of the city, he implored gentlemen to forgive and forget the little bickerings which might have passed in debate. The first business was to restore order; enough had already been done to ruin the credit of the province, and to destroy our character as a people, and this just at the commencement of a bright year, when the opening of the canals developed the most extensive navigation in the world, and when it was hoped that free navigation would bring the vessels of all nations to our harbours. He asked what consolation it would be, amidst the ruin of all these prospects, to remember that the streets of Montreal had been deluged in blood, when a united effort would have advanced the colony to the highest pitch of prosperity.

Mr. Gagy asked the Attorney-General West if it were the intention of the Government to allow the examination of the prisoners to proceed to its legitimate end? He spoke under a full sense of the responsibility which belonged to the declaration; but he thought he could take on himself to say that the peace of the city would be restored if the prisoners were either committed to trial or admitted to bail. Let the officer charged with their examination devote his entire attention to this business; and then, in the course of the day, the parties would be in a condition either to give bail or to apply to the justices of the Court of Queen's Bench for a *habeas corpus*.

Mr. Baldwin assured the honourable member that every endeavour would be used to expedite these proceedings.

Mr. Hincks also stated that the special constables who had been armed the preceding evening had been again disarmed.

Mr. Gagy expressed his satisfaction at both statements, and his firm belief that these measures would be followed by a speedy return of the city to its usual tranquil condition.

Mr. Boulton (Toronto) continuing the debate on the business before the House, declared his opinion, that the doctrines of responsible Government must be carried out in this colony; but when a Government assumed the broad ground that treason was to be paid, and rebellion to be rewarded, when the very basis of society was overturned, it was not to be wondered at if disturbances took place. [Here Mr. Gagy made some communication to the honourable member, who continued by expressing his desire not to say anything which might occasion excitement]. But he must ask, why members of the Government had gone to the telegraph office to prevent political messages from being conveyed, and had failed to prevent them. Now, if it were judged essentially necessary to prevent these communications, why did not Government ask in a way not to be refused? Messages were now pouring in from all parts of the country announcing that meetings were being held and enrolments taking place of men, who declared their determination that rebellion should not be rewarded, and that those who desired to do so, should be put down; this was also the feeling in England. A notice had arrived here in the "Army Despatch," which was known to express the views of the army, and especially of the noble Commander-in-Chief; and what did it say? Why, it declared that peace must be restored in Canada, and that the Governor-General must be driven out of the country.

Sir Allan MacNab did not understand that there was to be any discussion on the merits.

Mr. W. Boulton acted upon this hint, and concluded the observations which he was addressing to the House.