

so much oddity, that it was impossible not to be entertained. Once she decreed that a certain Prince G— should become a hen, to punish him for some trifling misdemeanor, and for this purpose she ordered a large basket, stuffed with straw, and hallowed into a nest, with a quantity of eggs inside, to be placed conspicuously in one of the principal rooms at Court. The Prince was condemned, on pain of death, to sit upon this nest, and rendered himself to the last degree ridiculous by imitating the cackling of a hen.

REFORM

MEETING AT HAMILTON.

[From the Journal & Express.]

The following Requisition having been presented to the Sheriff of the Gore District, a meeting was convened on the ninth instant, under the recent Statute regulating public meetings:—

To the Sheriff of the Gore District.

"We, the undersigned, freeholders of the town of Hamilton and township of Barton, request that you will call a public meeting of such portion of the inhabitants of the said town of Hamilton and township of Barton, as may be the friends and supporters of the late administration, for the purpose of adopting an efficient organization:

"Colin C. Ferrie, Samuel Mills, Geo. S. Tiffany, Thos. Brown, Brian Carpenter, H. H. Hills, A. Carpenter, John Mills, William Morin, William B. Sheldon, Robert McIlroy, Samuel Kerr, Joseph S. Clement, Milton Davis, J. Winer, S. Brega, R. G. Beaseley, S. B. Freeman, G. Sunley, William Macklem, Wm. Kirkendall, Frederick Lampman, D. Hoose, Joseph Rymal, Michael Hess, Stephen Blackstone, William Rymal, William Young, H. Smith."

At 12 o'clock the meeting was organized by calling the Sheriff to the chair, and appointing Mr. Brega secretary.

The Chairman read the requisition, which was directed to himself in his official capacity as Sheriff, and also the notice issued by him in compliance with it. He then informed the meeting that it had been approved under the provision of an act of the Provincial Parliament, passed last session, 7 Vic. Chap. 7, and explained its principal clauses. The act intended that any class or description of Her Majesty's subjects in the Province should be authorized to call a public meeting of their own class, description or party for any lawful purpose, and that at such meeting those who differed from them should take no part in opposition, as this would be such an interruption as the statute was evidently intended to guard against. He had not called the meeting as a party man, but under a conviction that it was his duty to yield to the reasonable request of any party or class of the people who might desire to hold a public meeting under the statute. The terms of the Requisition pointed out the description of people who are entitled to take part in the meeting, and he hoped that no others would interfere.

G. S. Tiffany, Esq., in moving the first Resolution, said, that as one of the Requisitionists he felt it to be his duty to explain their reasons for calling the meeting. They desired to organize their party for the purpose of securing the return of the Candidate of their choice at the next election—that to effect this organization they were of opinion that the usual course of establishing Committees in such parts of the Country as might be thought expedient and necessary, was the proper course. They were of opinion that to call a private meeting for this purpose, would be attended with this objection: that all of the party could not have an opportunity of giving attendance, and taking a part in the proceedings. They had, therefore, come to the conclusion to call a public meeting under the recent statute, and in doing so, to avail themselves of the protection which the Sheriff by virtue of his office as well as by the powers specially conferred by the statute, could give them for the peaceable holding of the meeting. His opinion of the law was, that the Sheriff was bound by the statute to call the meeting as it was for a lawful purpose, and was requested by a proper requisition to that effect, that had he refused to do so, he would have been guilty of a gross dereliction of duty.

It had been rumored that the political opponents of those who had called the meeting in-

tended to obstruct its peaceable course. He hoped it was untrue, although he saw a large number of those present. Independent of the statute, he claimed it as a matter of common right for any party to call a meeting of their own adherents, and that at such meeting those opposed to them had no right to obstruct their proceedings. The rules of common decency, alone, ought to be sufficient to show the rudeness and impropriety of such conduct. The opposite doctrine would have the effect of placing the country under mob-law. The learned gentleman then proceeded to give his definition of a mob, by saying that a mob was not necessarily composed of people in humble life, but might consist of men of the highest degree, and that it was by their conduct that they are to be judged. A mob may be defined as a riotous assemblage of people, who put the law at defiance, trample upon the rights of others, or in any way infringe the common laws of decency and good order. All that the Reformers ask is the right of meeting publicly and discussing their matters without molestation from their political opponents, and this right they mean to insist upon and defend. They have no wish to interfere with any similar proceedings of the opposite party, they have never done so. If therefore, those gentlemen whom he saw present of opposite political opinions; had come there as spectators, he was happy to see them, for the Reformers did not wish to conceal any of their movements. They rested their hope of success upon the rectitude and soundness of their principles. And their opponents would that day have an opportunity of witnessing their love of order, union and earnestness in the pursuit of what they thought was for the good of the country—things which without witnessing, they might through the blindness of party prejudice misunderstand. If however, they came there to interrupt the harmony of their proceedings, and thrust themselves upon the Reformers, he should be sorry to see them engaged in so disreputable a course. He hoped and believed the best. He then moved the first resolution, seconded by S. Mills, Esq.

Resolved, That the Friends and Supporters of the late administration present at this meeting, fully approve of the official conduct of those gentlemen, and declare that they are entitled to our grateful confidence.

The Chairman then put the Resolution to the meeting, by saying that all those who were in favor of it, should signify their assent by holding up their hand. Here Mr. Tiffany claimed a division of those in favor, and those against it. And the Chairman directed those in favor of it to pass to his right, and those opposed to it to his left; when the division was completed there appeared a decided majority in favor of the resolution, but Mr. Tiffany then claimed that under the statute, as well as by the terms of the requisition, those who had declared in the affirmative must be considered as truly composing the meeting, and those in the negative as merely spectators. The Chairman declared such to be his opinion; also, and expressed his thanks to the meeting for having at that early stage of the proceedings given him an opportunity of distinguishing those who really composed the meeting, from those who were mere spectators. He then put the Resolution to the bona fide members, who carried it by acclamation, none of the spectators voting.

S. B. Freeman, Esq., in an appropriate speech, moved the remaining Resolutions, seconded by Colin C. Ferrie, Esq.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting, the following outline of an organization of the Reformers of the County of Wentworth, including the town of Hamilton, to be extended hereafter if found advisable, be adopted and recommended to the reformers of the other portions of the county, viz:—That the Reformers do in each township form a local committee to consist of not less than nine in number, with power to fill all vacancies, and that each local committee shall elect its Chairman and Secretary; and when so formed to communicate with the Secretary of the joint committee for the town of Hamilton and the township of Barton: And that when the organization of Local Committees shall have been completed, the Secretary of the joint committee of Hamilton and Barton, give notice of a general meeting of said Local committee to be held at some convenient place; and that such assemblage shall form a general committee. And that the general Committee shall be empowered to act for the party in all things relating to our general interest.

That in the opinion of this meeting, one of the most important duties of the General and the Local Committees will be to disseminate

amongst the people correct political knowledge and true information of passing events, which may be done by the publication of and distribution of such knowledge in the form of Pamphlets or tracts, for as we have no secrets upon such subjects, our surest hope of success, depends upon frequent, open, and candid appeals to the reason of our fellow subjects upon all matters connected with our Constitutional rights and duties.

That the joint Committee for the Town of Hamilton, and the Township of Barton, consist of the following persons viz: Messrs. Ferrie, Mills, Tiffany, Hills, McElroy, Clement, Winer, Brega, R. G. Beaseley, Freeman, A. Carpenter, W. Macklem, D. Hess, Blackstone, H. Smith, Wm. Rymal, and that they have power to add to their number, and fill up vacancies.

That this meeting has heard with great pleasure of the formation of the Reform Association at Toronto, and that we cheerfully unite with that association in the objects proposed by it.

That the Committee now formed, do communicate with the Reform Association, and co-operate with it in all things, for the good of the Country.

That the Committee be empowered to adopt and promulgate an address to the Reformers of this County and District, in conformity with the above Resolutions, and invite their co-operation.

And upon the Chairman putting them from the chair, Mr. Duggan claimed to be heard, as he wished to move an amendment, but as he had been identified with those who voted against the first Resolution, the Chairman told him he could not allow him to speak unless he declared himself to come under the description of a friend and supporter of the late Ministry. Mr. Duggan insisted upon his right to speak and offer an amendment which he said he had prepared without declaring what his political sentiments were. He avowed however that he did not wholly approve of the late Ministry. Notwithstanding a good deal of violent declamation on his part the Chairman declared that he would not allow him to make his intended speech or move his amendment, and then put the Resolutions to the section on his right who voted for them unanimously.

The Chairman then enquired of the Requisitionists whether they had any other Resolutions to offer, and being replied to in the negative, announced the fact to the meeting and declared it at an end—advising them to disperse. He also stated that it was his duty to remain until all had departed; a great many of the Reformers then went away. Some, however, remained, being curious to see what the opposition would do, who were by this time in great fermentation, insisting upon it that they had a right to consider the meeting as still in existence, and demanded that the Sheriff should as Chairman put the Resolutions to the people present, which they were desirous of offering.

The Chairman declared that the meeting was at an end, that it was the duty of all present quietly to disperse, and refused either to put the Resolutions or recognize their proceedings as orderly. He likewise warned them that their conduct was in direct violation of the Statute, and of the consequences if they persisted, in their disorderly proceedings. They, however, did persist, and the different speakers severally put their resolutions to the left section, who voted for them without division. In these latter proceedings the Reformers took no part except as spectators. In fact the Chairman refused to allow Mr. Tiffany any to reply to the repeated attacks made upon him by the different speakers, saying that if Mr. Tiffany did so he would consider him as implicated in the tumultuous and unlawful proceedings then taking place.

After they had passed their Resolutions, Mr. Duggan in a complimentary speech, moved a vote of thanks to the Sheriff for his manly conduct in the chair, which Mr. D. admitted as impartial, although in his opinion, acting under a mistaken idea of the law, this resolution was carried unanimously, and after three cheers for Her Majesty, three cheers for the Governor General, and three cheers for the Sheriff, the people separated quietly.

Too much praise cannot be awarded to the Sheriff for his strictly impartial conduct, during the whole of this trying and exciting public meeting.

TO THE REFORMERS OF THE COUNTY OF WENTWORTH.

The Committee appointed at the public meeting of the Reformers of Hamilton, and Barton, held at the town of Hamilton on the ninth instant, beg leave to address you in obedience to one of the resolutions passed on that occasion.

The Reformers of this county, and we may say, of the Province, have long felt the necessity of an efficient organization in order to produce the union of action which is essential to insure success. Deeply impressed with the importance of the subject, the Reformers of Hamilton and Barton called the public meeting above referred to, at which, a plan or outline of an organization was unanimously adopted and which is set forth in the resolutions published herewith. The Committee are charged with the duty of inviting your co-operation in completing it. You will perceive that the machinery recommended is of the most simple and yet efficient description. It consists chiefly in the appointment by the Reformers of a local Committee in each Township in the County whose duty it shall be to attend generally to the affairs of the party within their several localities, and that the whole of these local Committees when assembled together, shall form a general Committee for this County. The Committee feel confident that thro' the agency of the proposed organization we will secure the triumphant return of our Candidate.

You will bear in mind that by the present election law, a pole will be held in each Township, which renders the appointment of local Committees more particularly appropriate. We feel confident that you will promptly and cordially unite with us in our suggestions. If not the fault will rest, with you, and not with the Reformers of Hamilton.

We know not how soon an election will come upon us, and we should lose no time in preparing for it; for when it does come, it will in all probability involve our dearest rights.

The Committee believe that you will not think they exceed the limits of their duty by offering you a few remarks upon the present political condition of the country.

They are of opinion, that it is sound constitutional law, that in every portion of the British dominions which enjoys a Representative or Parliamentary Government, the principle of Responsibility in all local matters as it is practised in the mother country, forms an inseparable portion of such government. It may be refused by Governors—if it may be denounced with all the fierceness of party spirit, and its supporters slandered by an unscrupulous press. But as it is true, so it is indestructible, and sooner or later it will prevail against all opposition. In this Province it received the public and solemn sanction of the House of Assembly, and Government in the celebrated resolutions of 1841, which may justly be styled the Canadian Bill of Rights. These resolutions are declaratory of our rights—they are plain to be understood, clear and definite in their meaning. There was no difference between the opposing parties as to the meaning of these resolutions until lately. The attempt now made is to give them a different reading—in fact so to construe them as to restore the old system and render them a mere bundle of words.

In order to explain our views upon this most important matter—we will go back to the first difference which met the public eye between His Excellency and the late Ministry.

Upon the resignation of the late Ministry, His Excellency sent down to the House of Assembly a message, containing the correspondence between himself and Mr. Lafontaine, on the part of the Ministry. This we may regard as containing the substantial grounds of difference between them. We find in that document that the late Ministry assert that His Excellency made, and offered to make appointments to offices of importance without their knowledge. That he told them that "public affairs would be more satisfactorily managed by and through the Governor himself, without any necessity of concord amongst the members of the Executive Council, or obligation on their part to defend or support in Parliament the acts of the Governor." His Excellency does not deny this in his statement; but says that the true cause of difference was the wish of the Ministry to direct and control the prerogative in appointments to office; which he absolutely refused to permit, because he said they wished to procure parliamentary influence through this means—at the same time he professes to give his adhesion to the resolutions of 1841.