

very first elements of the British Constitution, the very shield and protection to the people's liberties, a right not purely theoretical but to be resorted to in such extreme cases as occurred in Canada, was boldly denied to the house, but by it, as pertinaciously insisted upon.

What as the remedy resorted to by the Crown? How were the Canadian remonstrances met by the British parliament? They were met by the anticonstitutional Resolutions of Lord John Russell, Resolutions that virtually disfranchised the whole Canadian population and made them little better than a degraded race of helots; these resolutions fired the whole country with indignation. The people alarmed at this bold invasion of their rights as British subjects met in all parts of the province, to consult together upon their political affairs. — The proceedings of the numerous meetings held at this juncture, bore the universal character of increased energy, and in general were found to ascribe this wanton violation of the provincial constitution to the tyrannical exercise of power — the crushing of the weak by the hand of the strong without regard to justice.

The tone of these public meetings appeared to have at length fostered the attention of Government and to have demonstrated that the people had been earnest in their demands for reform and that they were now equally earnest in the expression of their deep sense of the wrong inflicted upon them by the Resolutions of Lord John Russell. Nevertheless it is confidently believed that none of the Resolutions passed, or the speeches made at any of the public meetings in Lower Canada, exceed the bounds of freedom of debate and proceedings sanctioned by the British constitution. It is very certain at all events that proceedings and speeches had been held and made in England, on the same subject, quite as emphatic, if not more so, than anything that had taken place in Canada.