

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1838.

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### CANADA.

LORD ASHBURTON. — My Lords, I think it may be safely affirmed of the Bill, now under your Lordships' consideration, that no measure ever received the support of such large majorities in both Houses of Parliament, which, nevertheless, had that support so reluctantly given to it. It is admitted by those who have introduced, as well as by those who support it, that this is a Bill of extreme rigour, of severe penalties; — the abrogation of a constitution solemnly granted; — the substitution, for a time, at least, of arbitrary for constitutional power, — a measure, in short, most abhorrent to all who, valuing national liberty at home, feel it a duty to promote it in all the dependencies of our empire. Such an Act can only find its justification in extreme necessity, — in a conviction that it affords the best and only hope of ultimately preserving those very liberties which it has, in the first instance, the appearance of sacrificing; and the first question I have to put to myself, to enable me to come to a decision in the matter, is, whether or not this necessity is clearly proved? I think it is. After an attentive consideration of everything that has been urged by the opponents of the Bill, and more particularly by the Learned Gentleman who has been heard at your Lordships' bar, no other alternative seems presented by them, nor does any suggest itself to my own mind. An open rebellion has broken out. This rebellion has no doubt been contrived by artful and mischievous