

liament House on Wednesday, the 25th instant, and gave the Royal assent to all the Bills which had passed both Houses, and been reported upon. This was the usual, and obviously the correct course. Had any other been adopted there would have been just cause for complaint. The time had evidently arrived when his Excellency was called upon either to assent to the Bill or to reserve it. As the representative of the Queen of a country governed on constitutional principles, through a Parliament, one House of which is freely elected by the people, his course was plain. He acted on the advice of Parliament and of his ministers, and assented to the Bill. Immediately a slight disturbance ensued in the Legislative Council Chamber. The disappointed faction was excited, and symptoms of disapprobation were manifested, which were further exhibited by renewed insult as his Excellency left the Parliament House, though, as we mentioned on a former occasion, the rioters were in a minority. The assent was given to the Bill about five o'clock in the evening, and immediately after means were taken to get up a public meeting. The fire-engines were got out, and the bells were rung in every direction. A most inflammatory and treasonable hand-bill was circulated from the office of the leading opposition paper, and a meeting was in a few hours organized, which was addressed by individuals prominently connected with the Conservative party. We have no hesitation in affirming our belief that these parties are responsible morally, if not legally, for all the consequences which ensued, although they of course disclaim all intention of transgressing the bounds of constitutional opposition. As their conduct is likely to be the subject of legal inquiry, we shall at present say no more regarding it; but from that meeting a portion of the mob of which it was composed, hurried to the Parliament House, where the Assembly was in session, smashed the windows with stones, and before the troops could be brought on the ground, applied the torch to the building, which was entirely consumed, with the valuable libraries of the two houses, and all the Parliamentary records. The opposition say that the Government should have foreseen this outrage, and should have had troops on the ground to prevent it. But the same parties admit that they themselves never contemplated the possibility of such an act of Vandalism, and had the troops been on the ground, they would have asserted that the ministry desired to suppress the legitimate expression of public opinion against one of their measures. The fact is, that there can be no security, under any Government, against the sudden violence of a mob. It is gratifying to know that the ringleaders of the incendiaries are afraid to acknowledge or to justify their acts, and while acts of violence are committed which no person of influence will assume the responsibility of justifying, it is obvious that although much mischief may be committed, there is no danger of any very serious consequences.

On Thursday morning all appeared for some time to be tranquil, but the prompt arrest at an early hour of the orators of the night before renewed the excitement. The accused were sent to gaol under a strong escort, and in the afternoon their friends gathered again in numbers about the Parliament House, offering insults of all kinds to the magistrates, and others passing to and fro. Great forbearance was manifested; so much so, that both the friends and opponents of the Government have charged it with want of vigour. No doubt the party in opposition would, on one-tenth of the provocation, have deluged the streets with blood. But we believe that it is a consolation to the Government that not a life has been lost during the late tumult. After some time the mob dispersed, as was supposed at the time, but news soon came that the rioters had gone off to the suburbs. Here they committed some wanton outrages,—first at the dwelling-house of the Inspector-General, Mr. Hincks, and the adjoining house of Mr. Charles Wilson, a member of the City Council, and Mr. Holmes, M.P. for the city. They next proceeded to the residence of the Honourable Mr. La Fontaine, where they committed a great deal of injury, and which they attempted to burn. A strong detachment of military was sent after the rioters on its being known that mischief was going on; but it did not reach the suburbs until it was too late to prevent the outrages referred to.

On Friday, the Government, finding that it was impossible to guard all parts of the city and suburbs against such outrageous attacks of a contemptible rabble, headed by ringleaders who were masked, and who were inciting them to acts of the greatest anarchy, determined to organize a body of special constables, to be furnished with police arms, and to be placed under the orders of a number of magistrates. This organization was speedily effected. The French Canadian and Irish inhabitants came in crowds to tender their services, and a force of about 800 men was, in a few hours, placed in the Bonsecours market. Exaggerated reports got into circulation. It was said that Government was arming the French Canadians and Irish to exterminate their opponents, and the latter getting alarmed, threatened counter-agitation. No disturbance, however, took place on Friday night; the constables were kept close in their barracks at the market, and the rioters dispersed, after hearing some inflammatory speeches from gentlemen evidently much excited, and labouring under false impressions. On Saturday morning the excitement was very great for a time. Sir Benjamin D'Urban had arrived in town on Friday, and the presence of his Excellency at once inspired general confidence. It became known that a corps of provincial dragoons had been sent for, and also some companies of the 71st Regiment. Some of the more influential gentlemen of the opposition having on Saturday morning pledged themselves to use all their influence to prevent further rioting, and Sir B. D'Urban feeling assured that peace would be maintained without the aid of the special police, it was not deemed necessary to require those services any longer, and they were accordingly dismissed. The thanks of the Government and of the public are justly due to those citizens who came forward with no other object than to maintain public order, and who did not commit a single act of violence during the time that they were in service. We have gone into these particulars in consequence of the gross misrepresentations circulated regarding this force. The fact that they were under the command of the Hon. Col. Taché, a member of the Executive Council, a man of proved loyalty and discretion, and that he was assisted by a number of magistrates of the highest respectability, men incapable