

police magistrate in the matter he had spoken of. The honourable gentleman then brought up the case of Mr. Perry, who had also been arrested, and from whom Colonel Gagy had received a letter also detailing the manner in which he had been arrested, and who was in prison. The honourable member read this letter also, and then urged on the Administration, if they wished to allay the excitement in the public mind, that some steps should be taken to get these men either liberated on bail or otherwise; or, if they were guilty, to have them fully committed.

*Mr. Wilson* said that every honourable member in the House knew that he had from the first deprecated the unfortunate occurrence of a former evening, and he had spoken his sentiments on the occasion advisedly; he had held no communication with any person whatever; he had retired from the excitement that prevailed, and had looked at this as a great constitutional question apart from the excitement of the moment. He had declared at once that he would array himself on the side of peace and order, and the honourable members on his side of the House had all declared the same thing. He had acted on this principle up to the present moment; he had spoken to hardly an individual in the House or in the city; he had secluded himself and looked calmly on at what was passing, and he spoke and acted not as being in the presence of the population of Montreal, but as in the presence of all time to come. He was opposed to responsible government in the first instance, because he did not suppose that we were yet fit for responsible government; he was sincere in that belief, and he opposed responsible government as warmly as he could oppose anything which could come before the House. But when that system of government was conceded, he must as sincerely and determinately set about carrying it out. He had not thought that a mere transcript of the British Constitution could be applied to this province in its present state, yet when that principle was conceded he was prepared to carry it out and wished now to carry it out, and he would endeavour to apply its principles to this question. According to responsible government, if the elections were fairly conducted, and he believed there was no charge that they were unfairly carried at the last election, because the gentlemen who were now the opposition had the power in their own hands at the time the elections took place. The elections were carried fairly enough, and the opinion of the country was fairly taken on all the questions submitted. He (*Mr. Wilson*) was surprised at the result of the elections, but nevertheless, the power had been constitutionally placed in the hands of the gentlemen opposite. If responsible government was to be carried out in its spirit, the Governor-General was, in all good faith, pledged to be advised by the gentlemen opposite, so long as they had the power and were supported as they were by the country. They had, in virtue of that support, the right to carry on the Government, and to advise his Excellency to give his assent to any measure they thought expedient, and his Excellency was bound to follow their advice, constitutionally given, and to exercise his right in a constitutional way in accordance with that advice, and the House and the country were bound to submit to it until their principles and conduct should meet with the disapprobation of the majority of the people. Such was his idea of responsible government. Now, he would apply this principle to the present case. Here was a measure, which, whether expedient or inexpedient, was introduced into the House and carried by the House after it had been fully and fairly debated; it was then carried to the other House, and passed that House also. Now he (*Mr. Wilson*) held that his Excellency was bound to give his assent to a measure which had thus passed both Houses without any reference to the Government at home, if he thought proper to do so. When he assented to it, that moment it became law, and that moment it became the duty of every man quietly to submit to it, so long as it existed as a law. To oppose it after it became law by force, as a principle, was rebellion; to oppose it by a resort to violence, as a popular demonstration, was madness. But let honourable gentlemen look at it in another point of view. Suppose there should be a change, and the present opposition should come into power, as it was to be expected they would some time or other; was it anything more than just to give the ministry that fair play which they would expect for themselves when they occupied their places? Suppose the British party came into power—and he did not use the term in any offensive signification—and that some of their measures should be exceedingly offensive to the French population of Canada, would they have a right to say that the Governor should not give his assent if he pleased to a measure passed by large majorities in both branches of the legislature, would they consider that a right course? No! They would hold it to be a gross violation of the rights which had been conceded to us. He, for one, should consider, that any Governor acted against the principles of responsible government who refused to give his assent to a Bill passed by a constitutional majority of the legislature. On a local matter as this was, he did not entirely concur in the opposition that had been offered to the measures of the honourable gentlemen opposite. He thought it right that a decided and constitutional, but not a dilatory and violent, opposition should be offered to their measures; and if they introduced bad measures, the country would turn them out of their places in due time, and for that time the minority ought to wait. He need not repeat what he said on a former occasion, as it was fresh in the recollection of honourable members. He was willing to stand or fall now and henceforth by what he had said upon that occasion, because he thought that they were such views as would meet the approbation of thinking men when this excitement was over. It was right that he should explain to the honourable members on his side of the House the reasons which induced him to consent to second this motion; he would more readily have seconded the motion if it had come from any one but the honourable member for Norfolk. But this was no time to stand at personal considerations: this was the time to forget personal and political distinctions, and join in maintaining the honour, integrity, and civilization of the country. He had said before that the occurrences