

NEWFOUNDLAND. that adopted in the corporations of the provincial towns in England and Ireland under the new Corporation Acts.

In proposing a property qualification, I am influenced more out of deference to certain respectable and influential classes of the community than from any opinion of my own of the necessity of such a test. If the number of the House of Assembly were increased, and some defined and constitutional control adopted over the initiation of all money votes, I do think that the selection of fit and proper persons to represent the various interests of the colony might safely be left to the householders throughout the island, and without any other limitation than is contained in the present charter.

I hope it may not be considered presumptuous in me to state, in conclusion, my humble opinion, that if the present constitution, so generously and liberally granted by his late Majesty, has not been found to answer the expectations formed at the commencement, the fault does not lie in the constitution.

The framers of it displayed great knowledge of the peculiar state of the colony, and, under all the circumstances, it was well calculated to promote the object contemplated.

The difficulties which it would have to encounter in its working were clearly pointed out in the profound and eloquent despatch of Lord Viscount Goderich, transmitting his Majesty's royal authority to Sir Thomas Cochrane to convene a General Assembly in Newfoundland.

I have, &c.

* * *

VOTERS.

No. 2.

1. I CONSIDER, in the present state of Newfoundland, a property qualification impracticable and unjust; it would have the effect to disfranchise the greatest and best part of the population. In a moral and political point of view, I consider household suffrage the best that has yet been discovered. A householder is, for the most part, a husband and a father, having a fixed locality; the peace of his community, the prosperity of his country, must be dear to him. The valuable boon bestowed by King William IV. of happy memory would be looked upon by the people as an unusual, an unmerited and unconstitutional withdrawal of a royal act of grace. The character of a householder ought to be clearly defined, and a rigid registration obtained.

2 & 3. A considerable addition to the number of members to the House of Assembly is necessary for the due performance of the increasing business of the colony; especial care, however, should be taken in the division of the electoral districts, that they do not lapse into close districts. The more diffused an electoral body, the candidate must calculate more for success on his fame and character than upon the force of his purse or the influence of family connexions. The towns ought to be incorporated, and the right to return members to the Assembly conceded to them; to a town possessing a population of 2,000 and upwards, one member; to a town possessing a population of 5,000 and upwards, two members.

4. The qualification as required by law for a member to the Canadian Parliament would be ample for a member to the Assembly of Newfoundland; the character and the independence of the Assembly would be enhanced by a similar law.

* * * *

I believe that the above regulations would be easily and most constitutionally effected by the local legislature.

* *

No. 3.

Sir,

St. John's, 8 February 1842.

I HAVE the honour to send you herewith my answers to the several interrogatories you transmitted to me by order of his Excellency the Governor. The documents appended, and to which my answers have reference, I have to request may not be made use of further than for the information of his Excellency, and that of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

* * *

To the Hon. James Crowdy, &c. &c. &c.

1. I do not think that a rent or property qualification would be productive of much, if of any, practical advantage. Household suffrage, guarded by an efficient system of registry, together with simultaneous voting under a new division of the electoral districts, such as I recommended in my communication to the Right honourable Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord John Russell, in July last, would, in my humble opinion, go far to render any other qualification unnecessary. Were no more than one person allowed to vote for one and the same house, that highly objectionable class of voters, lodgers and paupers, would be excluded. It is only in the principal towns, *e. g.*, Saint John's, Harbour Grace and Trinity, where property to any extent is held under a rental. In nearly all the other settlements the inhabitants occupy premises which have descended to them from their ancestors, or land which they have themselves redeemed from the wilderness, for which they pay no rent to the Crown, and on which they have built for the

the