

held as withdrawn by the communication from the Head of the Government protesting against it. It follows, of course, from the adoption of such a view, that the Ministers violated their oaths of secrecy as Executive Councillors. 3d. It is asserted that the Ministers took a great latitude in their explanations—stating facts not alluded to in Mr. Lafontaine's communication, and one Member is accused of speaking "de ce qui s'était passé sous Sir Charles Bagot." We propose taking up these several objections, in the order in which we have stated them, and shall therefore proceed to consider, 1st, the cause of the resignation. Mr. Viger is evidently much attached to forms and precedents, not more so, perhaps, than some members of the late Ministry. We are very far from finding fault with him on that score, but when we are referred to a *precedent* we must examine closely to ascertain whether the circumstances are similar. Mr. Viger is perfectly aware that under a bona fide system of Responsible Government administered as he, Mr. Wakefield, Mr. Buchanan, the Ex-Ministers, a large majority of the House of Assembly; and a still larger majority of the people think that it ought to be administered, a resignation could not take place unless on what he terms facts "*précisés, clairs et distincts*." Hence it would be difficult to find a precedent in England for the course taken by the Ex-Ministers, no Sovereign there having attempted, since the Revolution, to administer the affairs of the Empire unless with the advice of the Responsible Ministers of the Crown. The circumstances in Canada were such as to impose on the Ministry the necessity of establishing a precedent. Let us assume, for argument's sake at present, that the statements of the Ex-Ministers had appeared without comment, that Mr. Secretary Daly had risen in his place in the House and admitted both their correctness and that the Head of the Government had given his entire sanction to their being communicated to the House—What then would have been Mr. Viger's course? Would he have pretended that there were no facts "*précisés clairs et distincts*?" Let us examine the statement of Mr. Lafontaine for ourselves. The facts there stated are, 1st, that "His Excellency took a widely different view of the position, duties and responsibilities of the Executive Council from that under which they accepted office."

2d. That such "difference of opinion has led not merely to appointments to office against their advice, but to appointments and proposals to make appointments of which they were not informed in any manner, until an opportunity of offering advice respecting them had passed by, and to a determination on the part of His Excellency to reserve for the expression of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon, a bill introduced into the Provincial Parliament with His Excellency's knowledge and consent, as a Government measure, without an opportunity being given to the members of the Executive Council to state the probability of such a reservation."

We freely admit, and so did Mr. Lafontaine, that with the Governor's theory regarding Responsible Government we have nothing to do, unless in so far as it influences him in the actual administration of public affairs. But assuming as we now do the statement of Mr. Lafontaine to be correct, and admitted as such by the Governor, we maintain that there were facts "*précisés clairs et distincts*"