

and notified all the colonies that henceforth their own government should be in their own hands, and her authority never again be invoked against their rights. From that time to this there has been no colonial disloyalty, discontent, disaffection, or complaint. The question in England then was, how shall we keep the colonies? The question now is, how can we shake them off?

The session of Parliament in 1836 was, like its predecessors, one of strife between its Lower and Upper House, and ended without a vote of supplies. We then owed no public debt; there were no public creditors, except the provincial officials. There was for their payment one hundred and forty thousand pounds in the provincial chest, but without the "vote" not a shilling could be paid; and, from the judges downwards, all were suffering for want of their "arrears."

Thus matters dragged till the 7th of March, 1837, when that great constitutional statesman, Lord John Russell, in the spirit of an absolute despot, introduced into the House of Commons a series of resolutions, authorizing the Governor of Lower Canada to draw from the Provincial chest this one hundred and forty thousand pounds, and pay off all arrears of salary, without waiting for a vote of our House of Assembly, which, vested so far as concerned the Province with all the powers and privileges of the House of Commons, had the sole control. Many members, who expressed the true British heart, protested against such anti-British and unwarrantable resolutions, and told us we should be a disgrace to the British name and to humanity if we did not resist them to the uttermost; but they were carried by a great majority in the House; and in the Lords, Lord Brougham was the only dissident.

Lord John, however, became frightened with his own success. He said, in answer to inquiries, that he should not act upon the resolutions, but bring in a bill. Though twitted by Lord Stanley—now Earl Derby—the bill did not appear; and in June, after the accession of our beloved Queen,

he declared that, not wishing to commence the reign with so "harsh" a measure, he would *drop the resolutions, and add one hundred and forty thousand pounds to the army estimates, to enable the Governor to pay all arrears from the military chest, and wait the return by the province to a convenient season.* And so it was done. The commissariat obtained the money by special bills sold in New York, and commenced paying salaries on the 12th of October.

But the mischief was done. The news of the passage of the resolutions set the country in a blaze in April, and the news of this wretched ending only reached us in August, when the fire was too wide-spread to be smothered. Had Lord John Russell proposed in March to borrow from the military chest, instead of to rob our own, there would have been no "troubles of 1837." Whatever may have been the offences of that year, his offence was the greatest, and he the greatest of all offenders.

Our organs, the *Vindicator* and *Minerve*, taking their direction from the philosophic democrats of the House of Commons, on the 14th of April, sounded the key-note,—*"Agitate, agitate,"*—and quickly came responses from all parts. Parties became arrayed in most violent antagonism. On one side were all the Canadians, with the exception of a small party in Quebec and a few stragglers, the Catholic Irish, and a few scattering English. On the other side were all the English, with the above exceptions, and some in the townships, who only in the county of Missisquoi made any great demonstration.

There being no Parliament in session, or likely to be called, the people could only speak by public meetings, which it was decided should be held by counties. Richelieu led off, under the impetuosity of Wolfred Nelson, on the 7th of May. Montreal followed on the 15th of May, at St. Laurent, to consider the means necessary to protect the rights and liberties of the people, and Mr. Papineau spoke for hours. Neither at those meetings, nor in any that followed in