

Thus the whole scheme was negated. But since the time of these Despatches a more liberal and enlightened policy has enlarged the power of the people in municipal,—as well as colonial,—self-government; and, although it took fifty years from the establishment of the Province (1791 to 1841), to construct a uniform system of municipal government, the people were being gradually trained for it by an occasional grant of local powers.

In 1793 the first attempt at local government was made by an Act (33 Geo. III., c. 2) which provided that the inhabitant house-holders of each parish, township, or place should meet annually and elect a town clerk, assessor, collector, overseers of highways, pound keepers, and town or church-wardens.

From the Journals of both Houses it appears that the Bill for this purpose was introduced into the Legislative Assembly on the 20th June, 1793, and after passing through the usual stages was sent to the Legislative Council on the 29th June as a "Bill to authorize the appointment of proper officers in the several districts throughout the Province, and within the respective divisions thereof for the better preservation of good order, and the more regular execution of the laws." The Legislative Council converted the title into a preamble and intitled the measure, a "Bill to provide for the nomination and appointment of parish and town officers within this Province," under which title it was assented to on the 9th July, 1793.

The Act constituted the town-wardens "a corporation to represent the whole inhabitants of the township or parish," and that they should sue, prosecute, or defend all presentments, indictments or actions, for and on behalf of the inhabitants of the said parish.*

* The Act further provided (s. 7) that "as soon as there shall be any church built for the performance of divine service, according to the use of the Church of England, with a parson or minister duly appointed thereto, then the said inhabitant householders shall choose and nominate one person, and the said parson or minister shall nominate one other person, which persons shall jointly serve the office of Church-warden, and that such town-wardens, or church-wardens and their successor shall be a corporation," etc., as in the text.