

# HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

HALIFAX, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 1850.

## Speech of the Hon. Provincial Secretary on the Hon. J. W. Johnston's Resolutions.



Hon. Provincial Secretary rose and said: Having been called upon, Mr. Chairman, by my Hon. and learned friend the Leader of the Administration, as being more familiar with the correspondence which has passed on the various topics touched upon in the speech of the Hon. and learned Leader of the Opposition, I rise to vindicate the government from the aspersions which have been cast upon it. And, sir, before I sit down, I shall give to the Committee the reasons which prevent me from sanctioning the string of resolutions now before them. The Hon. and learned member will allow me to say—that those resolutions might have been drawn in a spirit reflecting more credit upon the generous feeling and good taste of the opposition; he will pardon me when I tell him, that, in the general tone and tendency of his observations of yesterday—as well as in the structure of his resolutions—a design is palpable, unfairly and ungenerously to drag into this discussion those who should, under our present constitution, be kept entirely free from animadversion in the documents presented to, or in the language used in this Assembly. It is true that the Hon. member has kept himself more guardedly within the privileges of the House, than he did last year; but still it will be apparent that there has been a desire unfairly to reflect on the Head of the government. I regret that this disposition is so apparent; I had hoped that we were advancing to better times—when different feelings would actuate us—when the members of this

Legislative Assembly, however they might meet and grapple with each other, would pause ere they invaded the sanctity which surrounds the representative of Majesty, or unfairly assail the conduct of the Secretary of State. I say to the hon and learned member at once, that I cannot support his resolutions. Why, in the very third line we are called on to assert, that "*the self government* extended to the British North American Provinces, by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, having placed the local affairs of the Province in the hands of the Executive Council, *unrestrained by any control on the part of the Lieutenant Governor or the Imperial Government, it is necessary to correct the anomalies and inconveniences unavoidable in the application of Imperial usages to a colony, &c.*" Now, Sir, I say I cannot give my sanction to such an assertion, for it is not true;—I mean not to apply the word offensively, —but I know of no other by which my utter difference of opinion can be expressed. The Executive uncontrolled! Sir, the hon gentleman little understands the restraining and controlling influences possessed by the Queen and by the Queen's Representative; but how does he reconcile that assertion, in the preamble of his resolutions—with his remark in the concluding part of his speech of yesterday—that "a governor might come here who would obstruct the party obtaining power, holding opinions contrary to his own." Sir, they cannot be reconciled, and the hon gentleman must feel the dilemma into which he has fallen by the use of two arguments so