

credit due to those who had overpowered by force, those who ought to have had that moral influence over them which they had so outrageously overthrown. The people who had perpetrated this outrage would, upon mature reflection, feel that they had inflicted a stain on the constitution of the country more dangerous to their own rights than anything that had ever occurred in British North America. The persons who were dissatisfied with this measure might have a perfect right to petition the head of the Government to withhold his assent from it, but honourable members ought to reflect upon the unconstitutionality—if he might use the expression—of endeavouring to induce the Queen's representative from giving his assent in Her Majesty's name to any Act which should have passed both Houses of Parliament. Had such a thing been done for the last two centuries in the parent state? And had we not flattered ourselves that we possessed a transcript of the British Constitution? Had we not flattered ourselves that, as far as our local affairs, at least, were concerned, we were an independent community—that we had an independent Government of our own, and that the Sovereign permitted us to control our own local affairs? But what became of those rights and privileges, if a portion of our fellow-subjects turned round upon us in this manner when they disapproved of what had been done? What was it but to proclaim to the world that we were not fit to be trusted with constitutional power, that we had not intelligence and integrity sufficient to carry out such a system? He thought, therefore, that hon. members on both sides of the House ought to express strongly and firmly their deprecation of the principle which this attempt would seem to sanctify, an attempt to control by these means the voice of the Legislature. It was stamping an indelible and lasting disgrace and discredit upon the country and the constitution, and on the entire people, to whichever side of politics they might belong. He was not now speaking politically, but constitutionally; he cared not, for the purpose of his argument, whether the acts of the Government were good or bad. The most corrupt and improper system of Government that could be carried out by a corrupt Government, supported by a corrupt Parliament, ought not to be put down by physical force, or controlled by any but a constitutional appeal to the people; but an appeal to a higher power—to the Queen—was doing an injustice to the constitution of the country. The attempt now being made—and he spoke without any bitterness, he looked at it in a constitutional point of view—was a suicidal act on the part of the men whom he believed to be loyal at heart, although their speeches might have excited the people to commit acts which they now deplored. He warned honourable members and the entire people of Canada to beware how they set the example of appealing to the Sovereign to revoke the Acts of the Legislature of the province, after they had been solemnly sanctioned by a large majority of the Legislature, and assented to by the representative of the Queen. It was, he repeated, a suicidal act on the part of any man to make use of the power which he possessed to petition the Queen against any measure that might have been passed by the Parliament of the province, for this reason, that it was an appeal from the voice of the people of the country, constitutionally expressed. The only proper appeal was to the people at the hustings. He would rather that the House should be dissolved before sunset, and an appeal made to the people at the hustings, whether or not they approved of the conduct of their representatives, even though that appeal should result in his own exclusion from public life, than that an appeal should be made across the Atlantic. If the Sovereign, acting under the advice of her constitutional advisers, should think proper to veto this Bill—he was not speaking in favour of or against the Bill, he said nothing of the merits of the measure—it would influence the country for years, perhaps for ages. An appeal to the British Government, in a case like this, was an appeal against the principles of the Constitution, which both sides of the House had acted upon and recognized as the basis of our civil and religious liberty. If it was to be done on the present occasion, what was to prevent its being done on another occasion? He threw it out for the consideration of all honourable members, that in attempting to go past our own constitution, our own Legislature, they were stamping an indelible stain on the constitution of our own country, which they themselves might see cause, at some future time, to regret; for what could be done on the present occasion could be done at some future period when the opposite political party were in power, and the same condition of things would exist as existed and was complained of in former times. He had already extended his observations too far, and would not longer trespass on the time of the House. He had endeavoured to speak calmly and without excitement, and to keep his passions under the control of reason. He would now beg leave to move that the rules of the House be suspended as far as related to giving notice, so as to enable him to move an address to his Excellency expressive of sentiments, in which he believed honourable members of all parties would most cordially, heartily, and cheerfully unite. The address he intended to move was as follows:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

WE, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Canada in Parliament assembled, have witnessed with feelings of deep sorrow and indignation, the proceedings of a mob of riotous and disorderly inhabitants of this city, who, in a time of profound peace and tranquillity, have committed several wanton and disgraceful outrages, as well upon persons as property, the most prominent of which is the destruction of the building occupied by the two Houses of Parliament. At such a moment of excitement, we feel it to be due to ourselves and our constituents to assure your Excellency of the devoted loyalty and attachment of the people of Canada to the person and Government of our beloved Sovereign, and of their earnest desire to preserve the connexion with the Parent State.

We further beg leave to express to your Excellency our deep sense of the justice and impartiality which has uniformly characterized the constitutional government of your Excellency,