

Debates, continued from first page.

which branch would become inmates of Bedlam, most likely; the Council who were alive to their rights, and have the spirit to protect them, or we who have spent three weeks in passing these Resolutions, and are now, at one word of resistance, to consign them all to destruction? But, says the hon. Gentleman, there is only one way to get rid of the question, we must rescind all the Resolutions. I say, Sir, there is another way; let us rescind that expression which has given offence, and which has nothing to do with the spirit of the Resolution in which it stands. Let us tell them the fact, that they keep their doors closed contrary to approved usage, and the wishes of our Constituents, and let us throw away the rest of a complicated sentence, framed in that way that we might have an opportunity of thrusting a poisoned weapon at the private feelings of individuals. Think you they will be satisfied by rescinding all the Resolutions, and appointing a Committee to draw up an Address, embodying their essence? never. Let us see how we would act in private life. Supposing that one of you had written an offensive letter, and, when an explanation or apology was demanded, you were to say, 'True, I have written you this letter, but I will put it in the fire, and to-morrow I will write you another as offensive.' Think you that would give satisfaction? Yet what else are we urged to do? I feel persuaded that the hon. gentleman who has led this measure would not act so in private life, and I should like him to tell me the distinction upon which he could justify such an action in public life. Sir, the hon. gent. from the County of Cumberland has told you that I am the ignis fatuus of the House, I could ask him now, who is the ignis fatuus? I would ask him if he is not now in a morass that requires all his ingenuity to escape from; if he is not where he will be torn with thorns and brambles to his heart's content.

Sir, I voted against the amendment of the learned gentleman from Windsor. It asked me to rescind a resolution which in the main I was in favor of. It asked me to deny that it was desirable to have the doors of the Council opened, when it is my expressed conviction that it is desirable. I want to rescind the needless and cruel insult which is embodied within it. But, says the hon. gentleman from the County of Sydney, our masters have ordered us to rescind it; and therefore we must do so. Sir, I will tell that gentleman that there are upon these benches men who acknowledge no other master than the sovereign voice of the people—who feel no responsibility but to those whose interests they have been freely chosen to protect; and I will tell him that those constituents require us not to advance one inch beyond those precincts which are settled, by the wisdom of our constitution, for the protection of its different branches and their rights. I will tell him that we have, notwithstanding, exceeded that limit; that we have dealt blow after blow at the other body, every one of which was an infraction of its privileges; and that we are now compelled to eat our own words. In vain you try to get rid of the matter by evasion, you must come to it at last; and I tell you that the course which is now proposed is as gross an insult as the one we are deserting. If you send out a committee to prepare an Address, founded upon these Resolutions, it must mean something or nothing.

Mr. Howe—The learned gentleman mistakes. The Resolution before the House does not state that the Address is to be founded on the original resolutions.

Mr. Uniacke—Well, perhaps I am mistaken. The resolution itself does not say so; but if I understood the observation of the hon. gentleman, it was, that after the original resolution shall be rescinded, a committee was to be appointed to frame an Address, embodying the substance of them. Sir, I will grant that it is an ingenious manoeuvre, but it cannot accomplish the object of extricating us from our difficulties. The Council will say—'We have been already insulted, and we will not do business with the House, till we have seen by their address whether they mean still to adhere to the expressions which have been so gratuitously employed.' In the very speech which the hon. gent. addressed to the chair, he told us that his plan is a nice evasion. When that debate goes forth to the public, and the Council are told that the steps which have been taken here in rescinding our resolutions are merely to give us the opportunity of renewing the insult, by gaining the vantage ground, think you they will not have the spirit to protect themselves against the threatened blow?

Sir, I really feel embarrassed to strike upon any plan which we can adopt with dignity or consistency. We have, ever since the Session commenced, been walking upon stilts; we have been elevated by our own high imaginations, to breathe an air to which we are unaccustomed; and now, that we are dashed to the ground, we are galled by the fall. Sir, it is because we are wrong and the Council right, that we are embarrassed;

if we had justice on our side, we would be bated and unmanly to yield to the threats of the other Branch; but it is because we feel and we know that we have gone further than our constituents will uphold us, and we fear to fall back upon them for support. If the course that is proposed be pursued, the address will be a milk and water affair, and useless, or it will be couched in the language of these resolutions, and then we will be sent to our homes. The Council have a check upon us. The Revenue bill is yet to be passed, and think you they will put themselves in your power, by removing the only barrier in your way. Thus we have lost, by our own impetuosity what we might obtain in moderation. Had we been contented in expressing no more than was necessary for the purpose we had in view, we ought to have obtained it with ease; we have deviated from that course to gratify feelings of no very creditable nature, and we must now lose our Revenue or Address.

Sir, it is fortunate that the Council possess the control which they have over our proceedings. It is fortunate, when the majority of this House are prepared to run mad, that there is another body that can exercise over us a wholesome restraint. Sir, I can easily imagine the feelings of this hon. mover of these resolutions at the present moment. I can picture to myself the torture which was gnawing at his heart; and I know that there are in his ranks some whose hearts defy the culture's iron tooth, or if it penetrate the mind, it would seek its vain for blood to slake its thirst.

Sir, this is a question of our rights, and had we acted as we ought to have done, our course would now be clear. If we had contented ourselves with no more than our duty, we would not now be in a situation where, perhaps, it is our duty to recede. The Resolution was not passed without consideration, I proposed an amendment, which left out the unnecessary sarcasm; but the House were unwilling to support me in the alteration. We were desirous of doing too much, and we will terminate by doing too little. I can see the embarrassing situation in which we are placed, but I look in vain for a glimmering of light, in vain for a clue to guide us through the labyrinth of difficulties.

Mr. Howe was aware that there were difficulties to be encountered in politics as in war, but his rule was to fight as the field lay before him, and, following the example of two ablest commanders, he was prepared to advance or retreat as circumstances compelled him, keeping always in view the great object to be attained—the final conquest and discomfiture of the enemy. I will frankly confess, said he, that the movement we are about to make, is one that exposes us to the small shot of my learned friends on the other side—they have been consistent in their opposition, but they will excuse us if we neither take their advice, nor turn from our course for the annoyance we may meet by the way. We will not be such fools as allow the foe to choose our ground, nor form our line of battle. I was in hopes to have formed a compact with the learned gentleman from Windsor, by which he was to cease from eternal references to the Press, and I was to spare the jests with which he tempts me to reply. Let me tell him, once for all, that he cannot elude from the minds of the people of this country, the facts and reasoning, which the Press has industriously instilled. He cannot change their opinions on the great questions now at issue between this House and His Majesty's Council. On a former day, the learned gent. compared me to a pirate, to day he has compared me to an ungallant soldier—he will pardon me if I seek for him a more humble comparison in Goldsmith's Schoolmaster:

Whose words of learned length, and thundering sound,
Amazed the gazing rustics seated round;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew—
That one small head should carry all he knew.

He believes that by taking the step I now propose we shall sink ourselves, in the opinion of the country, into the lowest abyss of degradation. How little he knows of our position or his own. Why, Sir, if I wanted a justification for my conduct in the eyes of the People—no matter what was the question—it would be only sufficient to show them that I was on the opposite side to him. If I voted with him it would excite their suspicions—against him, they would have a substantial reason for believing I was in the right. We have heard abundance of military illustrations from both the learned gentlemen on the other side—and no doubt they would both be delighted, while they and their friends in the other end of the building make the most of their resources, and practice every species of manoeuvre against the majority in this Assembly, if we, regardless, of consequences, rushed on when they hoped to catch us in their toils. Such generalship might be worthy of an old Martinet, but it is not what a Napoleon or a Wellington would recommend. The vultures, of which the member from C.B. has spoken, prey upon my heart no more to day than it did the first day I sat in this Assembly. It is the same that preys upon every

man's heart—which has for years fattened on the vitals and destroyed the prosperity of this country; and, when we attempt to drive it off—to startle the foul bird, then the cry arises from its learned friends and defenders, "Oh! this is not the time—not the tone—not the mode;" and therefore it is that I am afraid of their advice—and I caution the majority, who have steadily supported the Resolutions, not to be frightened or wheedled out of their course. Whatever is to be done, let them do it; and, so long as they are true to themselves, there is no danger in their present position. If wisely used, a great good will result from it; as it will show to the People and the Sovereign a practical proof of the statements to be embodied in the Address. Both will understand that the Resolutions are rescinded, not because they are not true, but because this house, being powerless is compelled by the public officers in the Council, whose salaries are provided by permanent laws, to sacrifice its forms, or else to sacrifice the Revenue. The language they hold is—"tell the King the truth, and it shall cost the Country £40,000." I trust that we shall tell him the truth, but we will choose our own time. They demand the pound of flesh, they shall have it, but not one iota more. If we sacrifice our Resolutions, their spirit, if not their very language, shall rise in judgment against them.

But, it has been said, if the obnoxious words had not been in the Resolution, the difficulty would never have occurred. I differ with the learned Gentlemen—were you not compelled, on a former occasion, to scold at the Bar one of your most talented members, for merely using his right to freedom of speech; did they not destroy the Revenue, because you resisted their impudent claim to control the ways and means? Has not almost every act of their intercourse with you this Session been an insult? They know their power, and at any moment will jeopardize the interests of the country to preserve it. But I am glad they have raised this question—I thank them for the position they have forced upon us—for I am much mistaken if this day's debate does not do more to reform their body than fifty Resolutions. Though a question of rescinding might fairly be debated with closed doors, ours thank Heaven, are open; the public eye is upon us, and the public ear drinks in the reasons for our conduct; and there is not a true friend to the principle for which we have been contending that will be for a moment deceived. Gentlemen boast of the warnings they gave us—they did, Sir; while we advanced in the march of reform, they were always in our front, now that we retire they hang like Puthians on our rear. I trust the solid column of reformers will not lose its presence of mind, though a few arrows may be thrown into its ranks. There is one question I wish the learned Gentlemen on the other side to answer—had we not moved in those matters, is there a man in the minority who would; would one of them have prepared a single resolution; or pressed forward to obtain any substantial reform? I knew they would not, and therefore it was, that I have all along cautioned, and still caution the majority, against their suggestions. They do not feel as we do—their opinions and their objects are not the same—they are separated from us by broad lines of demarcation, which I trust the country distinctly understand. I would gladly have so modified these Resolutions, as to have carried along a vast and overwhelming majority, but I knew it was impossible—they are not to be charmed by the spirit of substantial reform, charm it never so wisely. But we have spoken the real sentiments of the country, and even in their message the Council do not dare to contradict the facts, but complain of the discourtesy of our language.

In private life my own disposition is not to give offence; and if a party can convince me I have done him wrong, it gives me pleasure to make him amends—and I would carry the same feelings into public life too. But, when the folks in the other end of the building seek to put down the truth by taking us at disadvantage, I do not scruple to turn upon them those forms which enable us to defeat them, which the learned advocates daily use against each other in the Courts and in this Assembly. They are an extraordinary body, and only to be destroyed by extraordinary means. Only fancy, sir, that in England the Lords should refuse to do business with the Commons, and then have the power to dictate to His Majesty the course he should pursue to settle the dispute. The people of England would not submit to such a state of things, neither will we—and this message, and the debates of this day, will go far to put an end to it. Let me caution gentlemen, therefore, not to be alarmed. Let them keep shoulder to shoulder, and march on, cautiously but firmly, till their object be obtained. If we thought proper to waive our advantages in this affair, and place the matter on other grounds, we might contend that the Council have no right to notice resolutions which are mere instructions to a committee—which have not received the final sanction of this House—but which may be either amended or finally