

No. 1.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON to LORD KNUTSFORD.

(Received June 23, 1890.)

MY LORD,

Citadel, Quebec, June 9, 1890.

I HAVE the honour to transmit by this mail a copy of a loyal address unanimously voted in the House of Commons of the Dominion Parliament in the month of January last, which I have just received from the Speaker of the House, with the request that it may be laid at the foot of the Throne in the manner which you may deem proper.

2. I also enclose a copy of the House of Commons Reports of the 29th of January containing an account of the debate.

3. The address was moved by Mr. Mulock, Member of Parliament for North York, Ontario, a Liberal in politics, and therefore at the present time a member of the Opposition. When first placed on the notice paper the resolution was by some persons thought to be unnecessary, but after the explanation of the mover an interesting debate ensued during which members of both parties vied in expressing their loyalty to the Crown.

4. Mr. Mulock in submitting the motion stated that whatever party differences there might be he believed that there was one common bond of union—the great principle of British connexion. He did not move the address on account of any circumstances which had occurred, or which were occurring then, within the borders of Canada, but for the purpose of removing misapprehensions and of contradicting statements which if allowed to remain longer unchallenged were calculated to be injurious to the best interests of the Dominion.

5. He went on to say that it had been asserted in the press of the United States, and especially so during the past few months, that political institutions in Canada were being broken up, that the people were divided, race against race, creed against creed, province against province, and the Dominion against the Empire, and that this (it was alleged) had created a feeling in favour of independence or of annexation to the States which was only awaiting the opportunity to take practical form and shape. He added that the United States Congress had appointed a committee of the Senate ostensibly to inquire into the relations of Canada with the United States, but that the principal anxiety of the Commission was apparently to discover satisfactory evidence that Canada was in a frame of mind to be annexed to the United States. He believed that Canada was full of people who rejoiced by reason of their connexion with the British Empire, and that nothing had more aided it than “the events of the Victorian era in which we now live.” He moved the resolution believing that it was expedient that a candid declaration should be made in public of what were the sentiments of the people.

6. Mr. Mulock was seconded by Mr. Amyot, who commenced by saying that he spoke as a British subject of French descent. He quoted numerous extracts to show that the loyalty of the French Canadians had been often and fully recognised. He went on to say that they enjoyed a constitution which they admired, and that they are proud of being British subjects because under that constitution they find freedom, justice, and peace. In conclusion, he repeated the words of the celebrated Sir Etienne Taché “that the last gun which would be fired in defence of the British flag on this continent might very well be fired by a French Canadian.”

7. Sir John MacDonald, Prime Minister, and the Honourable Mr. Laurier (a French Canadian and formerly a member of Mr. Mackenzie's Government) now leader of the Opposition, in following the mover and seconder stated that though they had perhaps thought in the first instance that the resolution was unnecessary, they were now of opinion after hearing what had been said that it thoroughly expressed the sentiments of the representatives of the people of the Dominion. Their speeches were followed by those of some other members, and the house finally—according to the custom here—divided, the yeas being 161 and the nays none.