

From the Toronto Globe.

Speech of the Hon. H. J. Boulton
At the Great General Meeting of the
Reform Association of Canada, held
on the 25th ultimo:—

HON. HENRY JOHN BOULTON rose and said: he must apologize for appearing before the Association without some previous thought of how he should address them, but it was only on that morning that he had been able so to arrange professional business as to enable him to be present on that occasion. He felt however the deep importance of the subject so strongly, that he feared not his ability of proving its correctness to the satisfaction of all. The Resolution which he was about to propose was:

1. That this Association devotedly attached to the principles of the British Constitution, are determined to use every Constitutional means within their power, to secure the practical application of the principles of that Constitution to the management of all the local affairs of the Colony, convinced that in so doing, they are at once performing the duty which they owe to themselves and their posterity, and strengthening in the best manner possible the connection with the Mother Country, which they desire to perpetuate.

He (Mr. Boulton) felt proud in being the means of offering for the adoption of so highly respectable and so numerous an audience, a Resolution so truly Constitutional, and which must meet with the entire approval of every one. (Hear, hear.) He believed all, or nearly all present, were born in the Mother Country—and he would ask them, while they professed adherence to the British Constitution, whether when they left their own firesides—be it in Ireland, Scotland, or England—they expected that they were coming to a Foreign Country as slaves? (cries of no, no.) No, he believed that their hearts burned with love to their native land—but he felt that one and all must have expected that here they must receive all the privileges, which they enjoyed at home under the British Constitution. (hear, hear.) That was his feeling, and he had no doubt it was the feeling of all. Where, he would ask, was such a Constitution to be found? It was a Constitution envied by the whole world, and he doubted not they were all of one voice with him when he said, that not an effort of his should be left untried, while he breathed, to sustain and perpetuate that Constitution in Canada. (enthusiastic cheers.) It was a form of Government which he was satisfied, after long experience and deep reflection, was the best form to be found under Heaven. (cheers.) It was a form which protected the weak as well as the strong—the strong could protect themselves: A form which protects the interests of all within its sway, better than that of any other among civilized nations. [Loud cheers.] He [Mr. Boulton] would never flinch in saying, that he trusted to see it yet carried out in every portion of the British Empire. As regarded Canada, they were called to pass the Resolution which he now offered, because they felt that here it had been infringed on. (cheers.) The British Constitution was all they desired, and nothing less would they take; it guaranteed to them the liberty of the people, while carefully watched over by the Representatives of the people. (hear, hear.) We had an equal right here as in England, to watch and to insist on the proper application of its principles as enforced at home. He (the Hon. Gentleman) demanded that the people of this country should be placed on the same footing as at home—they were equally well entitled to it—and they ought to take nothing less. (Loud cheers.) In this Country it was of course impossible that the Sovereign could rule personally—and therefore a Governor was sent

to perform what Her Majesty could not do herself. (Loud cheers.) Now, he would ask, was it right that the deputy should have higher prerogatives than the person who deputed him? Ought a servant to have more authority than his master? Assuredly not.—(cheers)—and that being the case, the Governor-General has no right to exercise the prerogative of the Crown, otherwise than at home. (Hear, hear.) We contend (said Mr. Boulton) that the Governor shall rule by and with the advice of his constitutional advisers. This, however, is said to be inconsistent with the dependence of a Colony—but that he totally denied. He maintained that this principle was equally applicable to the Colony as to the Mother Country, —(cheers)—and he would show the advantage of such a system as was contended for here. The Administration in this country claim to advise the Representatives of her Majesty on all subjects—he made no distinction—involving the well-being and happiness of the country; and with regard to every local affair they had an indubitable right to be consulted. Why should this be, it might be asked? Because it was impossible for a Governor, coming here a stranger—and it would be worse if he were an old residenter, subject to all the prejudices and acrimony of local parties—it would be impossible for him at once to know and weigh in a just balance the wants and necessities, the feelings and the wishes of a population so widely extended as that of Canada. He must therefore take advice from some one—and who are likely to give it so well as those drawn from the Representatives of the people themselves? True, he may advise with the minority—but are they responsible? No, they are not; and it is RESPONSIBILITY WE DEMAND from the ADVISERS of the CROWN. It was right that the advice to be tendered to the Governor should be given by leading members of the Legislature—showing to the people that they enjoy the confidence of the Crown. (Loud cheers.) It is only from them that the Governor General can Constitutionally receive advice. He (the hon. gen.) would like to know, what Sir Robert Peel would say if, on going to Windsor to wait on Her Majesty, he were left in the ante-room, until Lord John Russell, or any other leading opponent of the Administration, had finished a private audience with her Majesty? (Hear, hear.) He said, without fear of contradiction, that Sir Robert Peel would have instantly resigned office and the only fault he had to find with his [Mr. Boulton's] hon. friend in the chair, was that he did not do so, the very moment he was so treated. [Loud cheers.] He was the last man to allude to the names of individuals, but he had heard of persons being consulted, who ought not to have interfered, while there were Constitutional advisers in office. He maintained that no person had a right to be consulted by the Crown but the Administration. The Governor-General conceded their right, it was true, to bring in Bills in Parliament—but that was a very trifling matter; any one could do that. [Hear, hear.] In his [Mr. Boulton's] opinion, the goodness or badness of laws depended more on the way in which they were carried out, than on the laws themselves—and if the laws were executed so as to give satisfaction to the people, it mattered little who introduced them to Parliament,—[Cheers.] It had been said that the Administration was only to be consulted on matters of "adequate importance,"—but he [the hon. gen.] said they were to be consulted on everything, [hear, hear.] He maintained that the mode of consultation ought to be, by the Heads of Departments going to the Governor, and saying what the coun-

try wanted, and what they recommended to be done, not by the Governor going to the Heads of Departments and telling them what he wanted done. [Loud cheers.]—He [Mr. Boulton] had been a hundred times in Downing Street, during the reign of several Sovereigns, but he had never known an instance of a King going there and giving his directions as to what he wanted done. [Laughter.] No, the Minister goes to the Sovereign and says, I propose to appoint such a person to office, and then the question is shall he be appointed by the Crown or not. The Crown has an undoubted right to say to Sir Robert Peel, "you shall not appoint Lord Ashburton as Minister to the United States," or "you shall not send the Duke of Buccleuch to Russia." Her Majesty has a perfect right to do so; but Sir R. Peel has an equal right to say, "if your Majesty has not confidence in my advice, I must resign." [Loud cheers.] "I cannot go before the country, and show that I am a mere instrument—that I have no say in my own Department. If my advice is not taken, it proves I have not your Majesty's confidence." Now that was the exact system of the British Constitution, and was acted on in the Mother Country; and he hoped that although he (Mr. Boulton) was an old man, he would yet live, and that before long, to see it in full and successful operation in Canada. (Loud cheers.) He would not be content with any other system, or with anything short of it. (Hear, hear.) He did not say so from party feeling—the demand was right and proper in itself, and he advocated it from a stronger impulse than mere personal considerations. In or out of power, he wanted no favor from any party whatever.—(cheers)—and, therefore, he was free to state all he thought on the subject. For the sake of the peace and prosperity of the Province, he trusted to see it acted on—he had never near said *conceded*—he did not like "concessions," the word stuck in his throat.—(enthusiastic cheers)—it was only an honest debt due to us which they demanded. Mr. Baldwin had said, that the Administration has to endorse every Act of the Government, and was undoubtedly true. Now there were four Banks in Toronto, and they all knew that if they endorsed a note to get money at the Bank, and the promiser did not fulfil his promise and pay the note, the endorser must meet the obligation—he *must pay the note*. [Loud cheers.] It was quite as serious a matter to endorse the Acts of the Government, as to put one's name on the back of a pretty large piece of paper. (Loud cheers.) Now, when they think the Government are likely to be defaulters, it is full time for the Ministry to withdraw—to take their names off the paper before they are sued. [Laughter.] A complaint is made against the late Ministry that they resigned—now that they had a perfect right to do. They were not bound to remain guarantees for paper which they did not think could be met at maturity, so they resigned, and left room for better men—if they could be found. [Loud cheering.] And for four months such men had been sought for in every direction, but whether it was on account of the wooden character of the country, he [Mr. Boulton] could not say—but they had not been found yet. [Much applause and laughter.] Perhaps they had not got on the proper "rail," yet. [Cheers.] For the last four months it had been often stated by parties opposed to us, that we had not come the length of being competent to govern our own affairs—that we are but children yet! Now he [the hon. gentleman] considered it the greatest mistake—he had never seen children with such beards—children of such large growth in his life.—[Cheers]—they were very precocious

children. The truth is, we are a People; and a people of as much importance as Scotland was at the time of the union. [Loud cheers.] How absurd it would have been to have talked of the Scottish people at that time as children. Why, the man who would have so spoken of them in those days, would have been apt to encounter the claymores of the descendants of Wallace and Bruce. [Enthusiastic cheers.] We are a million and a-half of people, mostly natives of Great Britain; and our emigrating to the Western World for a wider field for our energies, is a proof that we are an enterprising people. [Cheers.] We do know how to conduct our own affairs, and we do so in a proper manner. The only safe principle of our government, is to take Lord Durham's invaluable Report as its basis. I do think that Report does its author immortal honour, and devolves on the people of Canada a heavy load of gratitude.—[loud cheers] Now, all that was wanted, was to have it honestly carried out. We have been accused [said Mr. Boulton] of agitating and producing dissensions in the country, and preventing the views of Government being carried out. Now, if there has been improper agitation, it has come from our opponents: a small knot of persons here and there, to enable the government to carry on without responsibility, and to lay a foundation for clap trap answers, inducing people to believe that Responsible Government is fully accorded when everything possible is done to defeat it.—[loud cheer.]—I say it, Mr. Chairman, as on the house top, *that not one of these "Replies" has ever recognized the principle of Responsible Government!* [immense applause.] I feel that a large majority of the Legislature will sustain the great principle, that the people are competent to conduct their own affairs,—and I trust that they will adopt measures to carry it out, and firmly to establish it in the country. [Cheers.] They are the greatest destructives who strive to keep this question unsettled; and I trust that the people will show at the Elections that they are satisfied IT IS SO. The Hon. and learned gentleman resumed his seat amidst loud cheers.

JOHN BOXD, Esq. had much pleasure in seconding the motion. The motion was put by the Chairman, and carried by acclamation.

WILLIAM HUME BLAKE, Esq. rose to move the second resolution, as follows:

2. That Ministerial Responsibility to the people of this country for every act of the Executive connected with our local affairs, is an essential ingredient of our Constitution. It is a privilege to which we have as undoubted a right as England herself. And without it the responsibility of the Head of the Executive to the people of England is no guarantee for our liberties.

Mr. Chairman, if we are here assembled for the maintenance of no great constitutional right, if, as has been alleged, our only purpose be to thrust into office the members of the late Executive Council; then we are in my humble judgment justly chargeable with a very grave offence. For much as I should deprecate any capricious exercise of Her Majesty's prerogative, in the change of Her Ministers in this Province, I must yet confess that I could not consider such capricious exercise of authority, without some other ingredient, a sufficient ground for our present appeal to the people, (hear, hear.) But if, on the other hand, it shall appear that the question at issue forms the very basis of all the liberties of Canada, then I must take leave to deprecate the language of those who object against us, that our purposes are purely personal [cheers.] Is this country, or is it not, bound to entertain a grateful recollection of the man who has ever shewn that his country's rights