

THE GLEANER:

AND
NORTHUMBERLAND SCHEDIASMA.

VOLUME III.]

"Nec araneorum sane latus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes."

No. 13.

MIRAMICHI, TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 10, 1832.

THE GLEANER.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

REFORM BILL—THE EPISCOPAL BENCH.

Oct. 11.—Lord King presented two petitions in favor of the prescription bill introduced by the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench. He said the clergy professed to be averse to all changes, and to be desirous that every thing should remain unchanged, but when their own interests were concerned, became arch disturbers. (Hear, hear.) The other petition was to the same effect from a place in Ireland.

Lord Ellenborough defended the conduct of the Clergy.

Lord Sheffield had always considered the existence of the Right Reverend Prelates in this House as liable to one objection, as they always threw almost the whole weight of their body into the scale of Government. (Hear, hear, from the benches.) The Right Rev. Prelates, in a firm and close phalanx, lent their weight to the Government, and this led him to observe that the Right Reverend Prelates always did so when the Government was arbitrary and oppressive; but that the very instant that a liberal Government came into power, and proposed liberal and beneficial measures, the Right Reverend Prelates voted against them.

The Earl of Canarvon rose to order. There would be an end to all freedom of discussion and decision if this were to be allowed.

The Lord Chancellor had been taunted for not taking care to keep order, but he could only give his advice, which he would now give *et valeat quantum*. To arraign the motive of any Noble Lords in voting as they did, was certainly contrary to all rule and order. (Hear) But he did not hear that his Noble friend imputed any sinister or bad motives to the Right Rev. Prelates in voting as they did, but merely stated the fact and his opinion that this might prove injurious to the Church establishment, of which he was a firm and stedfast friend. The Right Rev. Prelates did not want to be exempted from observation. They courted observation. The Right Reverend Prelates had no doubt acted with the greatest disinterestedness (Hear, hear.) Good God! to impute to the Right Reverend Prelates that they acted from selfish and interested motives! No, they had with the utmost disinterestedness acted against the Government. (Loud cries of hear, hear.) They thought of tripping up the present Government—(hear, hear)—they had a right to do so—(hear)—and it could not be imputed to them that they were actuated by selfish motives when they acted against the present government, and attempted to trip it up, and probably thought that they had tripped it up. (Hear, hear.)

Lord Ellenborough rose to order. The Noble and Learned Lord had risen to give his opinion on a point of order, and now he was treating them with a speech from himself.

Earl Grey put it to the consideration of his noble friend whether he ought to persevere in a course which could be attended with no advantage, and was sure to be very inconvenient. The discussion could lead to no good.

Lord Suffolk did not question the motives of the Right Rev. Prelates, though he had thought that he was in perfect order in making some observations on their vote.—Their motives were, no doubt excellent. He had only observed on the matter of fact, that the Right Rev. Prelates had, for the first time, voted against the Government, when that Government happen-

ed to be a liberal one. He had stated the fact, without arraigning the motives of the Right Rev. Prelates; but if he was in any degree out of order, he begged leave to apologise to the House.

The Bishop of London had himself given neither opinion nor vote on the subject of the important measure lately before the House; but when the noble and learned Lord said that the Bishops desired to trip up the Government, he must say that no such thought had ever entered into their minds. The Bishops had no reason to wish that the present Government should be tripped up.

The Bishop of Llandaff had been anxious to vote for the second reading of the reform bill, but could not find reasons to enable him to do so. As to the imputations insinuated, if not expressed, that they had voted from interested and selfish motives, he regarded them as idle sounds—mere echoes of the discordant noises with which they had been assailed on their entrance into that House. (hear)

The Bishop of Exeter.—The Bishops had not opposed the measure because it was the measure of a liberal Administration, but because in their consciences they could not approve of it, and they were ready to brave the censure of the mob, even when urged and instigated by those whose duty it was to restrain those ebullitions of the mob—those who ought to uphold and maintain all the institutions of the country. And now they were to be told that they always supported an arbitrary Government, but voted against the Government when it acted on free principles, and introduced liberal measures. He defied any of the accusers of the Bishops to show a single instance in which they had acted from interested and selfish motives, although they had been outrageously insulted by a person holding the highest station in office. If he was wrong in being so warm, he trusted that the occasion would be some apology for him. A trumpety petition was presented, and that occasion was taken to hold out that the clergy, who professed to be averse to all change, were the greatest disturbers of existing right and institutions, and were spoken of with sarcasm and insult, and being interested and selfish, and engaged in a conspiracy against liberty.

Earl Grey—This was the most unfounded accusation that he had ever heard brought forward against any Ministers by any Member of the bench of Bishops. (hear, hear.) As to the annoyances that the Right Rev. Prelates might have received from the people, he and his colleagues had done every thing in their power to prevent such annoyances, both as regarded the right reverend prelates and others whose votes were most likely to expose them to such annoyances: and he asked the right reverend prelate whether he meant to say that he (Earl Grey) had ever done anything to excite and encourage such annoyances? The right reverend prelate had said that a person in the highest station in office had insulted and vilified the church. Now he was in what was generally considered as the highest station in office; and he asked the right reverend prelate whether he alluded to him or to his noble and learned friend on the woolsack? But to which ever of them the right reverend prelate alluded, sure he was that to neither of them could the accusation be applied with justice or truth. (Loud cheers.) But, not content with this, the right reverend prelate, with a warmth which little became the garb that he wore, had been so grossly unjust as to accuse them of being excitors and instigators of a mob to vilify and insult the right reverend prelates, (Hear.) To that he could only reply, that he repelled the imputation with the utmost contempt and indignation. There was not a syllable of truth in it—(hear)—and he could describe it in no

other terms than as the foulest calumny. If he would be capable of exciting and instigating a mob, there was no terms of reprobation with which he would not deserve to be visited. But he repeated, that there was no truth in the imputation, nor shadow or color of truth. He denied the charge. He had done nothing but what he was justified and bound to do in the discharge of his duty in that house. Instead of exciting and encouraging a mob against the right reverend prelates, or any other Lords who voted against the measure, he had exerted all the powers of Government to protect them, however hostile to him their vote might be. That vote they had a right to give if they chose it, and he never meant to question that right. He, therefore, called on the right reverend prelates to state the evidence on which he rested so foul an imputation. In all his observations he had shown the greatest respect for the right reverend prelates, and was a firm friend to the established church of England; and he still respected the right reverend prelates as a body notwithstanding the most improper speech and the foul aspersions of the right reverend prelate who spoke last.—(Loud cheering.)

The Bishop of Exeter said he was ready to produce the evidence on which he rested his assertions. On the first night of the debate on the reform bill, the Noble Earl was pleased to call on the Bishops seriously to consider what would be their condition in the estimation of the country in case they voted against the measure. The Noble Earl had put this in such a way as if he meant to induce the Bishops to vote for the measure, from a dread of the odium which they would encounter, in case they voted against it. This, whatever might be the Noble Earl's intent, was to call upon them by a menace to vote for the bill, and it had a tendency to excite the people against the bench of Bishops. The Noble Earl had called upon them under a threat to vote for the measure, and he had assumed the character of a prophet, and called upon them to set their house in order. The Noble Earl did not, indeed, conclude the sentence. That he had left for themselves to do. But, at the same time, the meaning was clear that destruction to their house was threatened. The Noble Earl had also reminded them that certain important questions were under consideration, of which the decision might be favourable or unfavorable as the vote might be. Did the Noble Lord mean that schemes of plunder were in agitation, which might be affected by the conduct of the Bishops? Whatever was meant, they had not allowed their conduct to be affected by such threats, but had voted as their consciences and sense of duty had dictated. What he said was, that the language of the Noble Earl had a tendency to expose the Bishops to odium in the eyes of the people, and to instigate the people against them; and this was the echo of what others had suggested, for the very same language was held by the public journals, which had assailed the Bishops because they had done their duty. (hear, hear.) This was the first time since the revolution that the bench of Bishops, as a body, opposed a great measure of Government; and yet they were threatened and menaced for having done so in compliance with their own sense of duty.

Earl Grey.—The right reverend prelate had said that he had on the first day of the debate on the reform bill addressed them in a tone of menace. He had certainly addressed them in a tone of warning but not of menace. He had put it to them as he had put it to other Noble Lords, to consider the consequences of opposing a measure, upon the passing of which the public mind was so much bent, but meaning to call on them to surrender their consciences, or to vote any other way than their sense of duty prescribed. He