

fathers of your Settlements, the original race who were the founders of our country; and it is a subject of pride to know that though many of them have passed away, their children and grand-children unite with those who remain in an expression of their approval of my public conduct.

Without confining myself to any particular part of your Address, I think I may venture to offer to my Constituents some general observations in explanation of the motives which influenced me in accepting a seat in the Executive Council.

You are aware that I have always advocated the introduction into this Province of the principles of Responsible Government; that on the discussion of Lord John Russell's Despatch in 1840, I stated, that "it was incidental to British institutions, and the only kind of Government which the inhabitants of the British Isles and their descendants would ever tolerate;" that the state of society was changing in the Colonies, and the institutions should keep pace with the improvement of the people. What might have answered in the first settlement of the country would not do now." And that at the Election in 1842, on referring to that subject, I thus addressed you:—

"Its transplantation into this Province is necessary, to fill up the measure of our constitutional rights. It simply requires, that the high offices of the Provincial Government shall be occupied by the most active men of business, enjoying the confidence of the majority of the Representatives; instead of the old practice of the most lucrative situations being continued as heir looms in certain families. Upon this plan, the internal affairs of the Province would be carried on by an Executive Council, composed of the heads of Departments, a majority of whom should have seats in the Assembly; all bound to resign office, when they failed to command public approbation for their measures. I am aware that this doctrine may be distasteful to a class of persons, who have brought up their children in the belief that they had the exclusive right to all the offices of value in the Province; but it is a part of the British Constitution, of which their united influence cannot much longer deprive the great body of the people. This system will place the Representative of the Sovereign in his true position. Instead of being ruled by a little knot of individuals responsible only to themselves, and compelled to incur all the odium of advice he supposed to be good, sustaining the vice regal character, and charged by the Sovereign to administer the Government of Her faithful subjects according to their well understood wishes, he will rise above the petty jealousies that may from time to time distract the Province; and acting under the advice of a really responsible Executive Council, force them at all times, in their own office and character, to endure the consequences of such advice."

I have always urged the applicability of these principles to this Province. For years I, and all others who expressed the same opinions, were denounced as Radicals and Rebels. No epithet was too opprobrious to express the contempt, which a large class of politicians entertained, either for the system, or for the men who approved of its adoption. In 1842, shortly after the introduction of Responsible Government into Canada and Nova Scotia, such was the ignorance and misapprehension in the country with regard to it, and so successful were the efforts of those who endeavored to deceive you, that although I had faithfully and honestly devoted to your service five of the best years of my life; had sacrificed my health in the performance of my Legislative duties; and had been compelled to leave my business for months at a serious expense to recruit it; although I had applied myself to the promotion of your interests with a zeal and energy which I should never expect to repeat, I was, after a violent contest, elected by a small majority of about a hundred votes. So great was the delusion, that I had the mortification to witness whole families, who in other respects were my best friends, recording their votes against me, in the firm belief that Responsible Government would sap the foundations of our monarchical institutions, and lead to the introduction of interminable taxation. It is a singular fact, in connection with that Election, that one of the unsuccessful Candidates, who at the different Polls descanted so largely upon his loyalty, and who studiously endeavored to impress upon the minds of the Constituency that it was the propagation of such principles in Canada which led to the rebellion, has latterly professed himself to be a convert to the doctrines which he then so greatly abhorred. I have always been so satisfied, that (to use the language of Earl Grey) "Parliamentary Government is a necessary incident to representative institutions in a certain stage of their progress," that I have deemed it to be my bounden duty to avail myself of every legitimate means which my position would give me, to press upon the Legislature and the country its adoption; and I have always entertained the firm conviction that the indomitable principles of freedom which pervade the Anglo Saxon race, would, in progress of time, develop themselves in this portion of the Anglo American family.

It would be foreign from my present purpose to trace the progress of Responsible Government in British America. That man must have read the history of our Mother Country very inattentively, who has not observed, that though our community is small, the principle has advanced in nearly the same manner in this country as in England, and with nearly the same consequences. Any attention to this subject will convince you, that so far as you can compare a small and poor community with a large and rich one, the analogous points are very striking. I have for several years regarded the progress which these principles were making in Canada

and Nova Scotia with intense anxiety; satisfied that the Liberals in New Brunswick, aided by the united example and pressure of the two adjoining Provinces, must in a short time indoctrinate the people of this Province; and it is a gratifying circumstance, that the leading men of all parties have become converts to these principles, and are prepared to assist in working them out. You cannot wonder that I feel a measure of honest pride and real pleasure at our present political position; when I find that after years of toil and labour, after the torrents of abuse which have been poured out upon us, our opponents admit that we are, and necessarily have been, always politically right, and that we have advocated the really Conservative principles of our Monarchical Institutions—the form of Government which our fathers, the old Loyalists, came here to establish. So great an impulse had been given to these principles in the country by the discussions in the Assembly in 1845, that at the close of the Poll at the Election in 1846, I discussed at large the state, probable progress, position and claims, of the Liberals. Many of my friends then, as now, desired the immediate introduction of party Government: and although I knew that the youth of the country were with us, and would at every future election swell our numbers, still, upon due consideration, I was convinced that the Province was not, in regard either to population, or to wealth, or to vigorous public opinion, ripe for party Government; and I stated my views as follows:—

"I believe party government the best in the world, where the population is sufficient to admit of it—it is one of the legitimate fruits of representative institutions. In this Province we have not yet the materials; it will require all the talent and influence of both parties to form an effective government—I am of opinion that a mixed government, equally divided between the two, is best adapted to the present state of the Province, and I go to the Assembly determined to urge that principle, and to claim for the Liberals half the seats in the Council. It is the only plan that can now be adopted to secure the confidence of the country in the Government, and to prevent unnecessary political strife. If the Government were composed half of Conservatives, the Conservatives in the Country would have confidence in its acts, and the Liberal half would secure the approbation and support of the Liberals. If the whole together, exercising moderate firmness and patriotism, do not surrender petty differences, and unite to promote the public good, then the only course would be to turn the whole of them out, and try a new set. I am in favour of introducing some of the heads of Departments into the Government, *as vacancies occur*. This I believe to be the true principle; I am disposed not to press it unnecessarily at present, but to leave it to work itself out gradually. Having secured the first principle—the accountability of the Executive Council to the Assembly—it would draw all the other consequences after it. It is the political lever by which the whole machine of Government could be moved.—If we get an Executive Council who would assume the responsibility and perform the duties of the principle offices of Government gratuitously, very well. I believe, that before *three years* either the unremunerated duties will be unperformed, or the Councillors will take some of the offices. I have always advocated these opinions. I do not like coalitions; but they are at present the only means of preserving this Province from interminable political strife, and I hope the Liberals will now unite as one man to secure their fair influence in the Councils of the Country. My position on the poll has given me a strong vantage ground, and I am enabled thereby to secure for my political opponents more substantial justice. The political discussions in this Province have not been previously attended with the consequences which have too often distinguished the political conflicts of the adjoining Provinces, and if we wish to preserve social intercourse, free from the effects of political strife, and not divide families and the members of families from each other in the war of party, we must press for a division of the Government, between the two parties. The Liberals in the Assembly have always found time to discuss abstract questions, as they were called, and then unite in good feeling to perform the business of the Country. In all measures of improvement you find them taking an active part. In the system of education, internal navigation, road or other improvements, election laws and reduction of salaries, you will find the Liberals taking an active part."

You know that the Government which was formed immediately after the opening of the first Session of the present General Assembly satisfied no party, and that all looked for some change. The Elections in Nova Scotia during the last summer, inspired the Liberals with new hope; which was greatly quickened by the returns from Canada. The formation of a Liberal Government in Nova Scotia, and the Despatch upon the tenure of offices communicated to the Assembly, convinced the most intelligent of the admirers of the old system, that a change was at hand. Impressed with the importance of Earl Grey's Despatch upon Departmental Government, and understanding that it had been communicated to Sir Wm. Colebrooke, I, on the 4th of February, moved an Address to the Lieutenant Governor, praying that he would be pleased to lay it before the Assembly. On the 10th, Mr. Hazen brought it down and stated, "that the Despatch had been transmitted to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor by Earl Grey, as containing His Lordship's views on the system of conducting public affairs in the Administration of the Government of Nova Scotia; which do not merely relate to that Province, but are of general application to British North America." On the 24th, the House, in Committee