

The Rev. gentleman then went on, in a speech of great length and ability to shew the injustice of the committee in striking out the word "local," as it would have such an effect upon various questions as to exclude them entirely from discussions and concluded by moving a resolution to the effect that, the debating class should be separated from the Mechanics' School of Arts as a debating society, but continue in possession of all the privileges of members, and that they should hire the room from the general committee to hold their debates, in the same manner as any other society or meeting unconnected with the School of Arts might do.

Mr. Rae, in a brief but able speech, seconded the resolution. He thought if the word "local" was struck out, it would completely annihilate the debating class, and that the committee might, in fairness, meet them half way, by acceding to the motion which had been moved by the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie.

Dr. Nicholson rose to oppose the motion; he thought that it was foreign to the object for which the School of Arts was established, to make it an arena for the discussion of religious and political subjects. He had been secretary to the institution for seven years, and during that time he had in every report which he had drawn up, insisted upon the avoidance of subjects of a political or religious character being introduced; those reports had been always adopted, but if they carried the proposed resolution they would disavow their own acts. He was persuaded that a political debating club would, in this colony, become a public nuisance, and he thought it was very improper for young men to meet together to discuss such subjects. He should conclude by moving, as an amendment, that the word "local" be expunged from the rule.

Mr. C. Kemp supported the amendment of Dr. Nicholson, and contended that, however numerous the members of the debating class might be, they had no right to act against the laws of the institution; and, if they did not wish to discuss strictly political questions, why should they want a law to enable them to do so.

Mr. Vannett in a long and powerful address, supported the resolution of the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, and strongly insisted upon the right of a public meeting of the members to alter and amend the laws of the institution, as they might judge expedient. The general committee were but the servants of the institution, and they had no right to dictate to it what laws should be adopted and what rejected. A public meeting of the members was competent to make any alteration in the laws; and, if a public meeting should decide upon retaining the word "local," the committee had not the power to alter it. The committee should therefore, in fairness, accept of the resolution which had been proposed, or, if they would not, he should insist upon the vote being put as to whether the word "local," should remain in the rule, and the voice of the public should decide it.

Mr. E. S. Hall, in a speech of great ability said, he appeared as a mediator between the two parties. He was sorry to see any thing like dissensions prevail. He thought that a debating class was of considerable importance, if it did nothing more than improve young men in the knowledge of their mother tongue, which, he felt persuaded, it would do. He was also of opinion, that there were many subjects of a political character which had nothing to do with party feelings, and the discussion of which would prove highly beneficial, inasmuch as they would cause those parties who entered into the discussion to make deep research into books and other documents. Of this nature were the laws relating to insolvency, the Corn laws, and several others. He thought it was but natural for young men to wish to have a class of the kind, where they might, after listening all the week to the grave lectures of learned men, have the pleasure of hearing themselves talk; and he contended that such a desire was quite laudable and proper; and, even though they might sometimes utter sentiments in favour of republicanism, for instance, surely the committee did not think that that would be able to overturn the British constitution. After pointing out several advantages which might be expected to arise from a well conducted debating class, from which all party politics and subjects of religious controversy were carefully excluded, Mr. Hall sat down amidst great cheering.

The Attorney General then addressed the meeting, and said he was glad to see so much good humour prevail; but he thought it would not be well to introduce for debate subjects of a political nature, as, if once introduced, the difficulty would be to know where to stop. The field of literature and science was wide enough without entering upon that of politics, from which he thought it would be quite impossible to separate feelings of party, for he believed they were quite inseparable. There was no institution in the colony in which he had taken a deeper interest than the Mechanics' School of Arts, and his only object in coming amongst them that night was to promote peace. He should not vote either one way or the other; but if he might be allowed, he would suggest the propriety of the resolution being withdrawn, and that they should all part in the same good spirit in which they had met.

Mr. Slatterie then addressed the meeting in support of the resolution, as did also Messrs. Rennie, Taylor, Garratt, and Curry. It was opposed by Mr. Goodall, Dr. a'Beckett, Mr. Falwasser, and Dr. Wallace. Mr. Davies also attempted to address the meeting, in reply to some observations made by Dr. a'Beckett, and in support of the resolution, but could not obtain a hearing.

Dr. Wallace moved, as an amendment on the resolution and the previous amendment of Dr. Nicholson, that it was expedient to separate the debating class, as such, from the Mechanics' School of Arts, but that any arrangement for effecting that purpose should be referred to the general committee, that being the only legitimate body that had power to effect it.

Mr. Hollinshed seconded the amendment, and Dr. Nicholson having withdrawn his, it was put, and carried by a large majority.

Colonel Barney vacated the chair, which was taken by Dr. Nicholson, and the Attorney General then moved a vote of thanks to Colonel Barney for his able conduct in the chair, which was carried by acclamation.

The meeting was then dissolved.—*Chronicle*

### Latest English Intelligence.

London papers of the 5th June, have come to hand, which fully confirm the report already received in the Colony, of the Ministry having been defeated by a majority of one, on Sir Robert Peel's want of confidence motion.—An account of the last day's debate, on that question will be found in another column of our journal. Lord John Russell gave notice that on the 7th of June, he would inform the House what course the Government intended to adopt; and it was doubtful whether Ministers would immediately dissolve Parliament, or whether they would, previously to so doing, introduce their proposed resolution for the revision and amendment of the Corn Laws.

CHINA.—Immediately previous to the departure of the "Terror" from England on the 5th of June, a despatch had been received at the East India House, from the Governor in Council at Bombay, dated May 1, 1841, of which the following is an extract:—

"The accompanying Calcutta Government Gazette extraordinary, dated the 20th ult., has reached this government, containing a notification issued under the orders of the Governor General of India, in Council, publishing for general information, the details of brilliant successes which have been recently achieved in China ending in the entire destruction of the defences of Canton, and in the placing of that city at the mercy of her Britannic Majesty's forces."

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—FRIDAY, JUNE 4.  
(From the Morning Chronicle)

Mr. Sheil resumed the adjourned debate. He began by calling attention to the fact that the resolution before the House contained no condemnation of the measures of Ministers, and did not, therefore, preclude the adoption of those measures by the opponents of the present Government, should they come into power. Mr. Sheil passed rapidly in review some of the leading points of the history of the Whig administration during the last ten years. While alluding to the recent foreign policy of the cabinet, he quoted the words of Mr. Berrier in praise of Lord Palmerston, and asked whether the House of Commons was now prepared to address the Crown, to transfer the direction of the foreign relations of the country to the party which, in 1829, abandoned Turkey to Russia, and, by permitting the Treaty of Adrianople, laid the foundation of all the difficulties that had since arisen in the Levant. Mr. Sheil proceeded next to the domestic policy of the Cabinet, and concluded by pointing out the additional difficulties which, in consequence of Lord Stanley's Registration Bill, would now present themselves to Sir Robert Peel, in an attempt to govern Ireland.

Sir Stratford Canning argued that Lord Palmerston would have acted more wisely, if he had conducted his negotiations more in the European, and less in the exclusively English spirit. He believed that at no distant period serious consequences might arise to the tranquility of Europe from the policy adopted by the noble lord. Mr. C. Buller believed that Sir R. Peel would find himself disappointed if he expected to catch any votes by the terms of his resolution, or by the logic of his supporters. The division would be a mere party division. The honourable gentleman commented upon the historical allusions made in the course of the debate to former resignations, in consequence of parliamentary minorities. In all those cases he maintained that the resignation of power had proceeded from the general inefficiency of the executive government. The Duke of Wellington resigned, ostensibly only, on account of his defeat on the civil list; but such a cause would have been unequal to such a result; the real causes were the disturbed state of the country, and the prospect of a defeat on the question of Parliamentary reform. That there was no such weakness in the executive at present was shown by the easy suppression of civil outrages, and the influence which Lord Palmerston had achieved for England in foreign countries, presented a gratifying contrast to the state of things that existed during the later period of the Duke of Wellington's administration. Mr. Buller was surprised that Sir R. Peel should censure ministers for acting on a system of conciliation. When the right honourable baronet was himself in power, his whole administration consisted of taking up the measures of his opponents, and carrying them by their aid. If the right honourable baronet were now to come into power, he (Mr. Buller) believed that the Liberal cause would not be much damaged, for the right honourable baronet would again find himself compelled to give offence to his more ardent adherents, by bringing forward such measures as he believed for the interest of the country.

Lord Duncannon admitted that Ministers might constitutionally appeal to the country, but they were not entitled to put off that appeal to an indefinite period. Recent elections had, however, shown what the effect of an appeal to the country must be.

Sir H. Verney alluded to rumours that Mr. Walter had been supported at Nottingham by the Carlton Club. Several members on the Tory side cried "No!" Sir H. Verney hoped the disclaimer was founded in truth, and concluded by declaring he placed entire confidence in the present Ministry.

Colonel Sibthorp criticised the measures of Government with that energy and peculiar style of eloquence, to which he stands indebted for the prominent position which he occupies in the House. Their shuffling conduct, he said, was almost too bad for the devil himself.

Mr. Haves argued that the passing of the Reform Bill had thrown all antecedent precedents into the shade, and it was on public opinion henceforth that a Government would have chiefly to rely for support; but there never was a point on which public opinion was more strongly pronounced, than it was now on the necessity of some change in our commercial legislation. He believed the proposed alteration in the tariff would, by giving a general stimulus to trade, lead to a much larger increase of the revenue than would be necessary to cover the present deficiency.

Lord Stanley complained that a resolution so strongly condemnatory of the Ministry had not been met by some bold and definite counter declaration. On the contrary, the motion had been met by a feeble opposition, and a tacit admission of its truth. He would maintain not only that the Government did not possess the confidence of the House, but that they did not even possess the confidence of their own supporters. In support of this position, the noble lord analysed the several divisions by which Liberal measures opposed by Government were negatived. The ballot was negatived in 1838, by 315 against 198, but to this majority the Conservatives were obliged to furnish no less than 250. In 1839, Mr. O'Connell's motion to assimilate the Irish franchise, and Mr. Hume's for the acceleration of the Reform Act were likewise negatived by majorities chiefly composed of members of the Conservative party Lord Stanley, amid the loud cheers of his own party, reproved Mr. Macaulay for having boasted in that House that the Ministry were supported by favour of the Crown. A more dangerous doctrine could not be appealed to by the Minister of a Sovereign of the House of Hanover! Returning to the immediate subject of the motion, Lord Stanley taunted the Government with their frequent defeats. If Jamaica was tranquil and content, and if the Irish Church was in the peaceful enjoyment of its revenues, it was because the Ministry had been checked and overruled; and if the finances of the country were in disorder, it was because the financial part of their administration was the only branch of it in which they had not been controlled by their opponents. He denied that the prerogative of the Crown to dissolve Parliament ought ever to become a subject of discussion in the House of Commons. For the time, the mode, and all the other circumstances of a dissolution her Majesty's advisers were alone responsible. For what purpose was this dissolution to take place? Was it to bring the two Houses of Parliament into harmony on the financial measures of the Ministry? That harmony already existed; and if the object of a dissolution were attained, the two branches of the Legislature would be brought into disunion, merely for the purpose of propping a tottering administration. But they were not at liberty to assume that a dissolution was impending, nor could any ministry be justified in calling on them to discuss so important a question as the Corn laws, with the menace of a dissolution before them. In reply to the frequent charges of inconsistency against himself, Lord Stanley declared that, after seven years of intimate intercourse, he was quite ready to share in any responsibility which Sir R. Peel might venture to take upon himself. The noble lord then, after a series of recriminations against Mr. Handley, whom he described as having been a steady supporter of Lord Liverpool, of Lord Grey, and of Lord Melbourne, concluded by declaring that there was a period when the measure of the iniquity of a ministry was at its full, and when the forbearance of an opposition must come to a close.

Lord J. Russell said he had no recollection of any motion, brought forward with so much pomp, which was less in the spirit of the constitution, or which contained less merit. If the energies of the country had been crippled by the weakness of the Government, that would be a fair charge against the Ministry; but had the energies of the country been crippled either abroad, in the colonies, or at home? Lord J. Russell then reviewed the historical precedents to which such frequent allusion had been made in the course of the debate, and argued that none of those precedents bore the application given to them by those who had appealed to them. He admitted that if the House of Commons withdrew its confidence from a Ministry, even though no motive was assigned for such a withdrawal of confidence, the Ministry must resign, or must take recourse to the only alternative which remained. It was only of late years, and more particularly since the passing of the Reform Act, that the duty had devolved upon the Government, of originating legislative measures on subjects occupying a large share of public attention; but when that duty was imposed upon Government, it was idle to suppose that individual members should not severally exercise their judgment upon the measures submitted to their consideration; but as

such pointed allusions had been made to the defeats sustained by the present Ministry upon their legislative measures, he might remind the House of what had taken place in former, but not very distant times. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and the measure of Catholic Emancipation were measures forced upon a strong Government and carried by the support of the usual opponents of that Government. The noble lord instanced several measures during the administration of Lord Grey, that had either become matter of conciliation and compromise, or which had been carried through Parliament with the assistance of the Opposition. Nor, constituted as the House of Lords now was, could compromise be avoided. His lordship drew a striking picture of the state of the country and its dependencies, at the time when Sir R. Peel retired from power, ten years ago, and pointed out the great changes that had since taken place; nomination boroughs done away with, the large manufacturing towns enfranchised, negro slavery abolished, municipal abuses reformed, the evils of the old poor-laws remedied, the grievances of the dissenters with respect to marriage and baptism relieved, the criminal laws amended, the poor in Ireland secured against destitution, &c., and he would appeal to the House whether at any period of history, or by any preceding administration, so many and such important improvements had ever been effected within the short space of ten years. These great changes, moreover, had been effected without civil disturbances, and without a deterioration of property. After replying, one by one, to the principal topics which had been made matter of censure against the Government, the noble lord arrived at the question of the budget, and that of the dissolution of Parliament arising out of the failure of the budget. He argued that, after bringing forward measures of such moment, Ministers would not have been justified if, on the first check, they had resigned power; they were bound to persevere while a prospect remained of being able to carry out proposals likely to be attended with such signal benefits to the people. He denied that any menace had been made by the Ministry with reference to a dissolution, but very direct menaces had been addressed by Sir J. Graham to Lord Worsley and Mr. Handley, while alluding to the prospects of the honorable and noble members for Lincolnshire. Lord J. Russell passed naturally to the questions on which the electors of that country would have to decide at the ensuing election. He alluded playfully to the mystery in which Sir R. Peel continued to envelope himself with respect to the Corn laws, and admitted that the Ministry had now been reduced to the alternative of resignation or dissolution. Nor could the result of that night's division make an appeal to the country less necessary; not even if Ministers resigned, would it be possible to allow a prolonged existence to the present Parliament. If the resolution now before the House was intended as a bar to dissolution, he must look on such a step as an unjustifiable interference with the prerogative of the Crown. If the motion was not so intended, they already had his admission that the present Government could not continue in power without an appeal to the country. To what end then, was the resolution pressed? The noble lord denied that a task of any great difficulty would be imposed upon the successors to the present Ministry, if no attempt were made to support interests opposed to the public welfare.

Sir R. Peel began his reply by sarcastically assuring the noble lord that it had been entirely unnecessary to inform him (Sir R. Peel) of the legislative changes that had taken place during the last ten years. The right honorable baronet then passed in review many of the most important of the measures alluded to, and claimed to himself and the Conservative party a large share of whatever merit those measures might boast of. He also claimed the merit of having assisted the Government in averting much mischief, and proceeded to taunt the Ministry with the financial difficulties to which their administration had conducted the country. Sir R. Peel entered upon an elaborate defence of the constitutional character of his resolution, which he maintained was justified by the very admission of the Ministry, that they must either resign or dissolve. It was not, however, till after he had given notice of his resolution, and if it had only brought the Ministry to admit that resignation or dissolution was necessary, it would not be wholly thrown away; still, he would insist upon it, it was an unprecedented and an unconstitutional course for a Ministry to condemn the House of Commons, and to exercise their own discretion as to the period at which a dissolution should take place. Sir R. Peel complained of the manner in which he had been pressed to state in detail his views on the Corn Laws, and appealed to the course he had always pursued. It was impossible for him to close his eyes to the influence which manufacturing prosperity exercised upon agricultural prosperity, but he thought himself entitled to reserve his opinion as to the details of the Corn Law Bill. He did not attribute the present manufacturing distress to the effects of the Corn Laws, but he would not pledge himself against any improvement in the present law. Why were the important financial measures of the Government not announced in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the session? The absence of all allusion to them in that speech, naturally awakened a suspicion that there were two budgets, one for fair weather and one for foul.

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