

Case of the late Change in Administration.

Lord Howick addressed the speaker nearly in the following terms: "Sir, as a motion has been made by an honorable gentleman for the adjournment of the house during that period, which, at this season of the year, is usually allowed as a relief from the fatigues of business, I trust it will not be considered improper or irrelevant in me to take the opportunity of giving the house that explanation which last night I intimated, that it is my intention to communicate. It is of the utmost importance to myself and my colleagues, that the circumstances which led to the recent change in his majesty's councils, should be fully and fairly explained. It is undoubtedly of considerable importance to the house and to the public, to receive that explanation, that they may be enabled to form a proper estimate of the character and disposition of those persons to whom the administration of the country has been lately entrusted; of the transactions which led to the dismissal of those persons, and of the probable result of the change. These considerations render important also the decision of the present question, as to the propriety of a longer or shorter adjournment of the house, from the necessity that may occur of bringing forward some measure which the late extraordinary events may shew to be expedient. For myself, sir, every feeling, every motive by which man can be actuated, makes it of the highest importance to me, that as soon as possible I may have the opportunity of convincing the house that my behaviour in this affair has not been such as to induce them to repent the kindness which I have ever had the good fortune to receive at their hands. Every moment's delay, while, during that moment, a doubt may be entertained by the house of the conduct of myself and my colleagues, who have heretofore enjoyed so many instances of their distinguished confidence & support, is indeed to me most painful. But anxious, sir, as I naturally am, to clear myself and those with whom I have had the honor to act, from the imputations that have been cast upon us, I feel in common with the honorable gentleman who so expressed himself yesterday evening (Mr. Storks Bourne) great regret at the necessity which I am under of doing so in the absence of those who, as some seem to think, ought to be present, to watch my statements, and detect my inaccuracies. In saying this, I am far from imputing to that honorable gentleman the intention of throwing out any unfair insinuations. I know well the natural partiality every one entertains for self, and I know that partiality may bias a man, and induce him to take a view, perhaps not strictly correct, of a subject in which he is personally interested; I am therefore as anxious as the honorable gentleman can be, that those persons should be present at the investigation of the transactions I have alluded to; and I earnestly hope that this matter may yet be discussed on some future day, when those honorable gentlemen may assist the house in examining and sifting the details in of it every part, from the commencement to the conclusion. Sir, it is neither in my nature, nor in my habits, to shrink from the examination of my life; but I am reduced to this alternative, either to have the public mind prejudiced by reports and misrepresentations, supported by partial extracts from confidential papers, or, in the absence of those who cannot now be present, to do that which justice to myself and to my colleagues, imperiously calls upon me to do, by a fair, open and manly exposition of every part of the late transactions, to afford the only antidote against the mischievous effects of those garbled statements and wilful misrepresentations. Under such circumstances, sir, it is impossible, in the fulfilment of my duty to myself, to my colleagues, to the house and to the country, to suffer such a period to elapse before I must make this explanation, as must necessarily intervene, ere the persons to whom I have alluded, can resume their seats in parliament. Their absence, however, will have this effect—it will induce me to confine myself as closely as possible to a dry statement of facts. I shall carefully avoid every thing that may lead to a discussion, and dwell on those points alone which are necessary for the vindication of myself and my friends. I shall cautiously abstain from entering into any argument founded on the facts which I shall relate, leaving, until after the holidays, when those gentlemen will take their places on the opposite benches, the further investigation of this business.

Having premised this much, sir, I shall proceed with as much clearness as I can, to make the statement that I have promised. It is well known, sir, that when the late administration was formed, it contained in it many members whose opinions and principles on what is termed the Catholic question, had been recently manifested in that most authentic way in which the opinions and principles of public men can be manifested by their speeches and votes in parliament. They came into administration therefore with a general knowledge of those principles and opinions; for certainly no expectation could have been entertained that those persons whose characters were sufficiently known would be willing, for the sake of a few considerations of emolument to abandon principles which they had so lately and so warmly espoused. No such requisition, sir, was in fact made to them; if it had it would have been incumbent on them, in support of their honor; and I am sure that they would have felt it strongly to be their duty then as now, to decline office. While I assert that the sentiments of a greater part of the members of the late administration on this subject were well known on their coming into power, I do not pretend to deny that the difficulties which existed in the way of any further concession to the Catholics of England & Ireland, were also well known. But as they came into office unfettered, and free to offer their advice on this important question, so also I will answer for every individual of them, they came into office with a sincere desire, while they adhered to their principles to avoid every subject that might prove repugnant to those feelings which they were bound by every motive of duty, of affection and of attachment to respect.—(Hear! hear! hear!)—This, sir, was the state of the case; their opinions on the Catholic question were well known; but they hoped, by a conciliatory mode of government to keep that question at rest. For a long time no difficulty occurred; at length towards the end of

last year, some circumstances took place in the West of Ireland—the most valuable and I very much fear that I must say the most vulnerable part of the empire—which called upon his majesty's ministers for attention, and which so strongly excited the anxiety that such circumstances must naturally excite. Unwilling to use that force which but two days after the meeting of the parliament, was strongly recommended by a person in this house, who was too impatient to wait for the operation of more lenient measures, his majesty's ministers hoped and that hope was gratified, to reduce the spirit of disturbance that had been manifested by a vigorous exertion of the power of the laws alone, without resorting to any intemperate proceedings. This occurrence, however, naturally led to the consideration of some measure, which might at once give satisfaction to the people of Ireland, and strengthen the means and policy of the empire. Various were the propositions that were agitated in the cabinet, but the one which was deemed to be the most obviously advantageous, was that, sir, which I had the honor to recommend to the adoption of this house. It appeared to be calculated to be highly beneficial to the empire at large by affording the means of recruiting to the greatest possible extent, the army and navy, from which so many persons are now excluded by what we conceive to be a weak and ill-understood policy. It appeared to us calculated to be highly beneficial to Ireland, for the reasons which I have before stated in this house, as tending to tranquilize that country, by holding out to the gentry the prospect of rising in the military and naval services, and thus attaching them to this country, and also by affording a vent to the perhaps superabundant population of Ireland, and thus drawing from the very sources of discontent, the means of strength and union.

These, sir, were the motives by which we were actuated. It is surely not necessary to repeat, and yet the base arts which are practised with so much industry may make it useful to repeat, that in this measure our object was not to invade, but to secure the establishments of the empire. If Ireland were rendered insecure, the establishments of England would be exposed to greater danger than any which could possibly result from such a boon to the Catholics. If, under such circumstances, a successful invasion of Ireland by the enemy were to take place, I call upon those who accuse us of endangering the establishments of this country, in God's name, to consider to what hazard those establishments would then be subject. Sir, while this measure was under the consideration of his majesty's ministers, letters were received from the lord lieutenant of Ireland, in which his grace stated, that a disposition had arisen among the Catholics to prosecute the claims that they had so lately & so unsuccessfully urged in the imperial parliament. Sir, I was the known supporter of those claims, but I could not avoid considering the prosecution of them at that moment as most impolitic. As far as my private opinion went, I did strongly recommend the discontinuance of any such attempt. The partial measure then under consideration appeared admirably suited to induce that discontinuance, and that discontinuance was effected. Such, sir, were our inducements—the general inducements of policy and principle. But we had also another inducement; we did hope that this limited measure would not encounter the opposition to which we knew the general question was exposed. In reverting to the act of the Irish parliament of 1793, we found that a pledge had been given by the highest servants of the crown, that a similar measure should be brought forward in this country. This pledge was recorded in the secretary of state's office, by a dispatch from lord Hobart, in which he distinctly stated the fact. Thus becoming a question not of policy alone, but also of good faith, we did hope that the limited measure might receive that assent and approbation, of which, on the more general question, we were aware that there was no hope, and which general question we therefore sedulously avoided. On those grounds, the measure that I had the honor of introducing into the house was submitted to his majesty. A detailed dispatch, lay on the table, was written to the lord lieutenant of Ireland, stating explicitly the motives for this measure, and this detailed dispatch was sent to his majesty, accompanied by a cabinet minister. From that first proposition his majesty certainly expressed a strong dissent; on that dissent being made known to them, the cabinet deliberated, and the result was, a respectful representation to his majesty of the grounds on which they thought the measure expedient. To these representations was returned an answer, in which his majesty, with considerable reluctance unquestionably, signified his assent—certainly with reluctance, but a positive assent. Under the sanction of this assent, the dispatch was sent to the lord lieutenant. At a meeting of the Catholics in Ireland, Mr. Elliott, the secretary of state, informed them of the separate measure which it was intended to propose. Some discussion ensued; and to a question from Mr. O'Connor, whether every rank in the army was to be opened to the Catholics, or whether they were still to be precluded from the staff, Mr. Elliott's answer was, that as the words of the dispatch implied that the Catholics would be allowed to hold any commission in the army, on taking the oath of allegiance, he conceived that the staff was included. A dispatch, containing an account of this conference, was sent to his majesty's government at home; and, soon after, a second dispatch, in which it was stated that the subject had been referred to the consideration of a general meeting of Catholics, by whom, notwithstanding the doubts that had been incidentally thrown out, it was understood that every military situation was to be rendered accessible to them. These dispatches, sir, containing these explicit statements, were sent to his majesty at Windsor, and received his most gracious perusal, but no objection whatever was then made by his majesty to the measure to which they related. However, subsequently to this period, there certainly did arise a doubt, whether the measure was distinctly understood in its fullest extent. It is only fair to say, that this doubt originated with some members of the cabinet. On its being started, I, and others of those with whom I had the honor to act, were most anxious that it should be completely removed, before the introduction of the measure into parliament. Sir, I have always considered that

a minister in parliament acts in a double capacity; he acts as a minister, and hears as an individual member of parliament; as an individual member of parliament, he may introduce or support a measure, unconnected with government considerations. Such was the conduct of Mr. Pitt, on the propositions for reform, and for the abolition of the slave trade, the latter of which has, thank God! been at last effected, & is a measure which, if there be nothing else to distinguish the late government during the short period that it has existed, will shed on it sufficient lustre. But, sir, when a member of the administration introduces any measure as a measure of government, it is most clearly his duty to be previously convinced that he has the concurrence of the cabinet, and the sanction of royal authority. I should, indeed, have thought myself reprehensible in the highest degree, and deserving of all the foul reproach that has been so lavishly bestowed upon me, had I introduced the measure I did introduce without having ascertained that it had the concurrence of the cabinet, and the sanction of the king. I have before stated that a doubt sprang up with regard to the latter; it was therefore determined that I (lord Spencer being absent on account of ill health) should write a dispatch to the lord lieutenant of Ireland, enclosing those clauses of the mutiny bill in which the proposed measure was contained, and re-stating according to the sentiments contained in the dispatch which had been sent in answer to the communication of Mr. Elliot's conference, that every commission in the army was to be open to the Catholics.—This dispatch, sir, I wrote with as much clearness as was in my power to do. With the clauses it went to the king on Monday; on Tuesday it was returned from Windsor, without the slightest objection on the part of his majesty; and as I had been accustomed to do on receiving the royal sanction, I immediately forwarded the dispatch to Ireland. In the mean time, sir, objections were started, merely in point of form, to the mode of proceeding in this measure by clauses in the mutiny bill, and on a reconsideration of the subject, it was thought better to introduce a separate bill. On Wednesday, I attended the levee at St. James's, and had my usual audience of his majesty. After the audience, his majesty inquired what business was going forward that day in the house of commons? I replied, that the mutiny bill was to pass through one of its stages; and explained to his majesty the reasons which had induced me to embody the clauses for allowing the Catholics admission into the army and navy, in a separate bill. His majesty approved of this change, and then asked me whether the bill was not the same as the Irish bill of 1793? I stated in what the difference consisted, observing that it had been fully detailed in the various dispatches previously submitted to his majesty's inspection: Here, sir, I must acknowledge that his majesty did express a general dislike and disapprobation of the measure; but not in such a manner as to induce me to conclude, that the reluctant assent originally given by his majesty was withdrawn, and that I was not empowered to introduce the bill. What confirmed me in my opinion was, that lord Grenville had a subsequent audience with his majesty, in which his majesty did not make a single observation on the bill. On Thursday or Friday, I do not recollect which, I introduced this bill into the house. During the whole of the week, although I had various communications with his majesty on other subjects, his majesty did not make the slightest objection to the bill, nor was any intimation on the subject received from his majesty until the Wednesday following (at which time I was precluded from attending my duty in this house by a family calamity) when his majesty stated decidedly his objection to any extension of the provisions of the Irish act of 1793.—From that moment we were convinced that his majesty had misunderstood the subject, or rather I was convinced that I had misunderstood his majesty. Having unfortunately introduced the measure into the house of commons, in the belief that I was sanctioned to do so by the king, I immediately suspended any further proceedings on the bill, demanding an audience of his majesty on the following day, and convinced him that I had been misled, and that I had misunderstood those gracious expressions, which he had used on the subject on a former occasion. From that moment too, sir, it became the most anxious consideration of ministers how to reconcile their public duty with their respect for the feelings of his majesty. We attempted to correct the bill; but the objection of his majesty was so extensive, that we found it was impossible to modify the measure, so as to remove that objection, and at the same time leave it efficiently beneficial. In this situation we preferred abandoning the bill altogether. In doing this, sir, I own that I made a most painful sacrifice of all personal feelings to my sense of public duty; but this is a sacrifice which, however painful, I trust I shall never hesitate to make. We therefore offered to withdraw the bill, but at the same time we felt the necessity of adding something to that offer. On a former occasion a desire had been intimated, that nothing of the kind should in future be pressed; other intimations had been made of a similar nature. We therefore thought it right to reserve to ourselves the power of expressing our opinion, and of suggesting to his majesty any future measures that might seem to us expedient; accompanied, however, with a respectful declaration, that all the members of the cabinet were most eager to contribute every thing in their power to his majesty's personal ease and comfort. This part of our proceedings, sir, has been most shamefully misrepresented to the public. In falsely stating, that we wished to reserve to ourselves the right of pressing this subject on his majesty in future, it has been omitted to state that our only wish was to submit any measure which might seem expedient to his majesty's revision; it was omitted to state, that we respectfully assured his majesty of our earnest desire to regard his personal ease and comfort.

Sir, in what situation should we have been placed, had we not retained the right of expressing our sentiments? The bill introduced by us must be withdrawn. I certainly felt, that without unnecessarily exposing his majesty's opinion, I might have assigned sufficient public reasons for withdrawing the bill on account of the general opposition which had been made to it; but, sir, was it possible, consistently with my honor, and consistently with my sense of duty to my colleagues, that I could refrain

from declaring my own sentiments upon it? Besides, in withdrawing this measure, we had naturally to look to a Catholic petition, and to the pressing of the general question with more eagerness than ever on the consideration of parliament. Was it not necessary, in defence of their honor, that those should again state their opinion upon it? and would it have been honorable, would it have been fair, not previously to apprise his majesty of that course which we felt it to be our clear and undoubted duty to pursue? Sir, I am confident that in making this appeal to the house I cannot be unsuccessful. Let me put it in another point of view; suppose, after some discussion, that the measure had been abandoned; and suppose that on the presentation of the Catholic Petition, we had freely stated our opinion without any previous intimation to his majesty, what sort of charge would then have been brought against us, by those who now accuse us for having made a candid explanation to his majesty of our sentiments.

But to return, sir, to the history of this transaction. His majesty, in reply expressed his satisfaction at the defence we had shewn him, but required us to withdraw the other part of our statement, and to give an assurance in writing not only that we would never again propose the measure in question, but also, that we would never propose any measure connected with it.—Sir, as far as personal motives operated in this demand, I am convinced that they were of the purest description: for, during the short time that I have had the honor of being in his majesty's service, I have had frequent opportunities of remarking his majesty's gracious and benevolent affection for his people, and the anxious desire by which he is urged to promote their welfare.—(Hear, hear, hear.) As far, therefore, sir, as his majesty was personally concerned, I can have no doubt that in this demand he was actuated by the most honorable and conscientious motives alone. But neither myself nor colleagues being able to assent to this requisition, we stated to his majesty the impossibility of complying with it. The next day his majesty in the same gracious manner that we have ever been accustomed to experience from him informed us that he must look out for new servants. Two days afterwards I was authorized to state this circumstance to the house, and, on Tuesday last his majesty signified his pleasure that on the following day we should resign our offices.

This, sir, is a statement of the whole transaction, as far as it can be stated, without a reference to the various documents that I have described. I much wish that those documents, in an unaltered state, were before the house and the public; and if his majesty will be graciously pleased to give orders to his servants to produce them, I, for one, shall be highly grateful. These documents will bear completely out in the assertions, first, that we did not propose the measure to his majesty without sufficient reasons for so doing; secondly, that we did not propose the measure to parliament, without sufficient reason to be satisfied, that it had his majesty's concurrence; thirdly, that when we discovered his majesty's insurmountable objection to the measure, we fulfilled our duty by conceding it; and that in adding the respectful request to allow us the liberty to state our opinions on that subject, and to propose to his majesty any future measure that we might think expedient, accompanied with the assurance of our anxiety for his majesty's personal ease and comfort; instead of improperly pressing the question on his majesty, we were simply doing that, which, not to have done, would have been to have justly subjected ourselves to the reproach of every honest and honorable man. Sir, I shall be ready now, or hereafter, to enter into any further explanation that may be demanded of me. I am sure the house will have the candor to believe my declaration, that I feel not the slightest disposition to complain. I can entertain but one feeling with regard to the gracious and benevolent disposition with which his majesty is animated; and so far from endeavoring to lessen the respect and attachment that is felt for him, no man will be more ready and anxious than myself to increase it. Indeed, sir, I should be most ungrateful, were these not my feelings; for during the short period that I have had the honor of being in his majesty's service, I was honored with repeated marks of his approbation; and on quitting his service, his majesty, satisfied (with the exception of this single measure) with what he was pleased to term my faithful and diligent discharge of my duty, conferred upon me the high reward of his approbation.

Sir, having concluded my statement, I shall abstain from entering into any argument upon it. I will not attempt to shew how inconsistent with our honor it would have been, to have given a pledge on a point in which, above all others, it is most essential that a minister should be free. I will not attempt to shew that we should have acted most criminally, as well as most unconstitutionally, had we agreed to give that pledge. I leave the statement to the candid and dispassionate consideration of the house and the public. If any one think that out of that statement a discussion can arise, when those persons by whom the late administration has been succeeded, return to their seats in parliament, I shall most cheerfully engage in that discussion. I am therefore anxious that the adjournment should be as short as possible; and had hoped that Monday se'night, by which day the new writs may with ease be returned, would have been a proper time for the re-assembling of parliament; but the difference of two days is so small, that it is scarcely worth contending for; and I shall therefore agree with the honorable gentleman's motion, only stating, that should any gentleman think proper to bring this subject into discussion, I am desirous that the earliest possible day should be selected for that purpose.

Mr. Huskisson expressed his approbation of the candid manner in which the noble lord acceded to the proposed adjournment. He decreed debate upon the statement made by the noble lord in the absence of every person connected with that side of the house, who was acquainted with the particulars of the statement referred to; and was sure no intimation had ever existed of misrepresenting facts.

Mr. Fuller wished to know whether the noble lord opposite, and the noble lord who had in the other house introduced the bill for the abolition of the slave trade, had brought forward that measure as members of admin-

istration, or an individual member of parliament. (A laugh.) Lord Howick answered, that he and his noble colleague had recommended that measure as individual members of parliament. Mr. Fuller then asked whether the seals had been taken from the noble lord and his colleagues on Tuesday morning. Lord Howick answered that the notice of the command to deliver up the seals had been communicated on Tuesday, and they had been delivered up on Wednesday morning.

Mr. Brand gave notice, that on Thursday fortnight he would submit to the house certain resolutions expressive of his sentiments with respect to the conduct of the late administration; and also expressive of his sentiments with respect to the grounds upon which his majesty had been advised to dismiss them.

Gen. Loftus stated, that no pledge had been given by the Irish government in an extension of the act of the Irish parliament of 1793, to Great-Britain; but he admitted that a prospect of that amount had been held out. Nothing was wanted to make the people of Ireland completely happy but good order and industry. The mass of the people were in a situation as comfortable as that of any honorable gentleman who heard him. The Catholics were only debarred from being judges in the courts of law, from being members of parliament, and from being generals on the staff, and these were restrictions that were never felt as grievances by the Catholic body at large.

It was then ordered that the house should at its rising, adjourn to Wednesday the 21st of April.

BY THIS DAY'S MAILS.

NEW-YORK, May 21.

ARRIVED.
The ship Washington, Weeks, of Portland, 40 days from Rochelle. April 15, lat. 43, 30, long. 17, spoke ship Victress, Mattocks, 10 days from Bordeaux, for Baltimore. 30th, lat. 38, long. 44, 30, spoke brig Mercury, Davis, of Philadelphia, 21 days from Bordeaux for Baltimore—parted from her May 9.

The ship Vigilant, Clay, 27 days from New-Orleans.

The brig Harvey-Hide, Dodd, 24 days from Tobago. May 17, in lat. 39, 30, long. 74, was brought to with 3 guns from the brig Mercury, Davis, 43 days from Bordeaux for Baltimore. Capt. Davis's reason for bringing the Harry Hide to was merely to forward three letters, which captain Dodd was good natured enough to take.

The brig Osprey, Hatch, 35 days from Cork. April 30, lat. 49, 30, long. 28, 33, spoke a Danish Indiaman, from Batavia for Copenhagen, having two days before, spoken the ship Fame, from Liverpool, for N. Y. dismissed.

The schr. Enterprize, Crowell, 23 days from St. Pierre. Left, brig Edina-Aus, and 3 masted schr. Jason, both of Baltimore.

The schr. Clotilda, Goodwin, 10 days from Richmond.

The sloop Victory, Oldridge, 11 days from Washington, N. C.
Cleared, ship Susan, Collins, Dublin; Thomas, Turner, Bordeaux; brig Jane, Morris, Curacao; schr Thomas, Currie, St. Johns, N. B. Charlotte Augusta, Cozens, Halifax; Wezel, Naylor, Halifax.

Below, the brig Nancy, from New-Orleans—schr. Jacob, Getting, of Newbern, 19 days from Guadaloupe—And in the offing, an hemiphradic brig.

By the Washington, from Rochelle, we have received Paris papers to the 1st of April. The Argus of the 31st March, contains a letter of William Temple Franklin, grandson of the late Dr. Franklin, repelling the 'foul charges of the American Citizen, that he had sold his grandfather's manuscripts to the British government, that they might be suppressed. He declares that the originals, with the copy prepared for the press, are now in the hands of his bankers in London; and that they are not lost to the world, but will be published in a manner worthy his ancestor's great name;—that he had offered them to several eminent booksellers in London, but none would undertake to publish them; assigning as a reason that the period was not propitious for their publication, owing to the state of affairs in Europe, which occupied solely the public attention, so that no work of any extent would sell.

The Paris papers as usual, contain no news. Augereau had gone to the waters of Barez for the recovery of his health. No fresh bulletins.

[Per the Osprey—one day later.]

LONDON, April 8.
We have heard it from so many quarters that it is impossible for us to doubt the fact, that Mr. Canning was negotiating to form a part of lord Grenville's government, and that it was on the point of being carried into effect, even after the Catholic bill was brought forward. In that case, he would have been a supporter of that measure (as indeed he always has been) and now in opposition; whereas he now sits on the treasury bench, and must be considered as an enemy to the claim of the Catholics.

We have good reason to believe, that a declaration has been made to the new ministers, from the highest quarter, that a dissolution of parliament, under no circumstances, shall take place!

It is generally reported that our new ministers have already projected some military movements, which it is hoped will at once harass the enemy, and give succor and support to our allies. The transport board has in consequence intimated to the usual contractors for providing transports, that it will soon be at liberty to treat for an unlimited number for three months service, and that the contract will not be limited to copper-bottomed ships. It is certainly the opinion of many distinguished military men, that while the enemy was kept so fully occupied by the vigorous movements of the Russians in Poland, and so much pressed by our brave ally, as to be obliged to march to the grand army every soldier that could be removed from France; this country might have taken the opportunity to destroy all the works at Boulogne, and annihilate the cock boat flotilla there—an enterprise which would have produced incalculable benefit in depressing the arrogant views of the common enemy, and raising the confidence, and exciting the energies of other powers to assert their independence. We hope that whatever the