

"Enclosure No 1 in Duplicate Despatch

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1854" "Ballarat

(From our Correspondent)

November 30<sup>th</sup>

Most happily yesterday passed over quietly. The meeting was held and the subjoined resolutions were unanimously passed.

About mid-day, a platform was erected, and the Australian flag, and it only, hoisted to attract attention. Messers. Black, Kennedy, and Humffray, arrived

by the conveyances from Geelong immediately before the hour of meeting. After their arrival some time proceedings began. Mr T. Hayes having been voted into the chair, the deputation to town was called on to state how matters stood there. It was stated that the hands of his Excellency are so bound that he is comparatively powerless, in so far as the extension of the franchise to the diggers, the more perfect unlocking of the lands, and the release of the prisoners, when demanded by the diggers.

Strong hopes however, are entertained by the deputation that if a memorial be presented the prisoners will be immediately released. The appointment of a liberally-constituted commission is considered to be an event of importance, as the instructions of the commission are to rectify all that is wrong, as far as there is power vested in them or Sir Charles.

Mr. Hoyloake had not returned from his mission to the upcountry gold fields, but he is at present hourly expected.

The principal speakers were Reynolds, Weeks, Salor, Brady, Vern, Quin, G. Black, Wheatley, Murname, Ross, Hummfray, Kennedy, & c.

The resolutions were:-

1. That this meeting views with the hottest indignation, the daring calumny of His Honor the Acting Chief Justice, while on the Bench, of the brave and struggling sufferers of Clare, Tipperary, Bristol and other districts, in their endeavours to assert their legitimate rights, and do hereby give the most determined and the most emphatic denial of the assertions of His Honor, in stigmatising as riots the persevering and indomitable struggles

(line not readable)

for freedom of the brave people of England and Ireland during the last 80 years.

2. That a meeting of the members of the Reform League be called at the Adelphi Theatre, on next Sunday at 2 o'clock, to elect a central committee, and that each 50 members of the League have the power to elect one member of the Central Committee.

3. That this meeting, being convinced that the obnoxious Licence-fee is an imposition and an unjustifiable tax on free labour, pledges itself to take immediate steps to abolish the same by at

once burning all their licences. That in the event of any party being arrested for having no licence, that the united people will, under all circumstances, defend and protect them.

4. That as the diggers have determined to pay no more licences, it is necessary for them to be prepared, for the contingency, as it would be wholly inconsistent, after refusing to pay a licence, to call in a Commissioner for the adjustments of such disputes, and that this meeting therefore resolves that when any party or parties have a dispute, the parties so disputing shall each appoint one man, the two men thus appointed to call in a third, and these three to decide the case finally.

5. That this meeting will not feel bound to protect any man after 15th December, who shall not be a member of the Reform League before that day.

6. That this meeting protests against the common practice of bodies of military marching into a peaceable district with fixed bayonets, and also any force, police or otherwise, firing on the people under any circumstances, without the previous reading of the Riot Act, and that if Government officials continue to act thus unconstitutionally, we cannot be responsible for similar or worse deeds from the people.

Right Rev. Bishop Goold, and Rev. Mr. Downing, came from Melbourne yesterday. So urgent did they consider their business that, I understand, they travelled all the night previous. After their arrival, Rev. Mr. Downing and the Rev. Mr. Smith tried to persuade both the Committee and the meeting to give up the intended burning of the license, but without avail. The amendment to resolution three had scarcely a favorer. If I understand aright, this deputation came up at the instigation of the Government, which wished them to use their influence and prevent the hurrying on of the crises which nears, now that the licences are burned. The number of licenses already burned is pretty large; the next license hunting day is the one on which all eyes are at present centred.

During the earlier portion of the meeting, and for some time, the military under arms were posted in the gully beneath the Camp, and all the other force was under arms in the Camp. The Rev. Mr. Smith and Mr. Kennedy went over, at the request of the Committee, and wished military to be withdrawn from the sight of the meeting, as there was no real use for the display, and that may felt irritated at such open parade of power.

The meeting passed off quietly; there was a large number of persons fully armed, who kept up a running fire of small arms. The meeting dispersed with only a slight accident to a horse from a pistol ball.

A large body of police was marched up yesterday evening to the Camp, on Eureka, to watch it, as the night before, there had been a complete rush made on it by the diggers there, and some violence committed.

We have, I believe, (for I cannot arrive at correct official information) six soldiers and police in the hospital, some badly wounded, from the effects of Monday evening and nights row. This does not include Capt. Young, who was contractor for the conveyance of supplies from town, and who was cruelly used as to render his life in imminent danger. In addition to all this sad list, must be added one soldier of XII, who has died of a gun-shot wound.

Many others, both officers and men, are seriously hurt, though not in the hospital. I have heard several versions of the origin of this quarrel. By tomorrow I hope to know the real state of the

matter. This morning gives promise of providing a brichfielder; the dust is flying in all directions, under the influence of a strong hot wind."