

No. 3.

From Lieutenant Governor SIMCOE to the Right Honourable HENRY DUNDAS.

No. 5.
Lieutenant
Governor Simcoe
to
The Right Hon.
Henry Dundas,
6th Nov. 1792.

Sir,

Navy Hall, Niagara, 6th November 1792.

IN my general Letter descriptive of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly I did myself the Honour to intimate to you the Necessity there was for a Bill to make valid Marriages that had been contracted in Upper Canada, and of providing for them in future. I enclose a Bill framed for that Purpose by Mr. Chief Justice Osgoode, which I must beg that His Majesty's Ministers will take into their early Consideration; I also subjoin a Report on this Subject, submitted to me by Mr. Cartwright; but I cannot omit this Opportunity of most seriously and anxiously requesting the Attention of His Majesty's Ministers to the Ecclesiastical State of this Province. I have no Reason to alter those Opinions on this Subject, which I humbly submitted to the Consideration of His Majesty's Ministers previous to my leaving Europe.

12th Oct. 1792.

I need not, I am sure Sir, observe, that the best Security that all just Government has for its Existence is founded on the Morality of the People, and that such Morality has no true Basis but when placed upon Religious Principles; it is therefore that I have always been extremely anxious, both from political as well as more worthy Motives, that the Church of England should be essentially established in Upper Canada; and I must be permitted to say, Sir, I received the greatest Satisfaction from your Expression, "that you did not think that Government complete without a Protestant Bishop," as I conceive such an Institution necessary to the Support of the Experiment that is now making, whether the British Government cannot support itself by its own Superiority in this distant Part of the World.

I beg, Sir, to observe to you, that the Sources from whence a Protestant Clergy shall arise seem totally to be prevented by the Want of the Episcopal Function in this Province. On the one Hand, the Distance and Situation of Nova Scotia render it less practicable that any Candidates for Ordination should have recourse to the Bishop of that Diocese than to those of England or Ireland; and on the other, those who have been ordained by the Bishops in the United States are, by an Act of Parliament, incapacitated from performing any Duty in Upper Canada; but did the Situation of the Province in this respect, degrading as it would be to the Church of England, end merely in the Privation of its Offices and Benefits, it might not be of such infinite political Importance as the Room that is hereby made for the Introduction of every Kind of Sectaries, many of whom are hostile, and none congenial, to the British Constitution. I am perfectly aware of the great Necessity that there is of guarding against any unnecessary Expense in the further Establishment of this Country, yet I cannot but consider that it would be the worst and most disabling of all Economy to lose the great Opportunity that is now open of forming the Character, Temper, and Manners of the People of this infant Colony to British Habits and to British Principles; and this I think may be done comparatively at little Expense. The great Body of Puritans in America, however misrepresented, draw their Origin from the Church of England, and are nearer to it in their religious Belief and Customs than they are to any other Sects or religious Descriptions. The State of Poverty in which they must for some Time remain after their Emigration will naturally prevent them from the Possibility of supporting their Ministers by public Subscription; in the meanwhile, the Government has it in its Power immediately to provide for any Protestant Clergyman in the separate Townships, by giving him a reasonable Landed Property, in perpetuity for himself and Family, and entrusting him with the Care of that Seventh which is to be reserved for the Protestant Clergy. Under these Circumstances it is probable that the Sons of respectable Settlers would offer themselves for Ordination; and though they might not in the first instance have the Learning of the European Clergy, their Habits and Morals might as essentially promote the Interests of the Community.

It is by these Means, Sir, that the Influence of the Protestant Clergy may extend and increase with the rapid Growth and Value of those Lands which