

Postmasters,  
Revenue Officers,  
Sheriffs, in the  
Legislature.

Your Petitioner is returned by a constituency of landed proprietors nearly equal in numbers and assessed value of property with the United constituencies who return a fourth of the whole popular representation consisting of fifty-two members. In utter contempt of the law, there are seven or eight Postmasters, and three or four Collectors of the customs and excise revenue, sitting in the present House of Assembly for places where they ought to be performing other official duties; also a principal Sheriff holding office during pleasure, and representing the place of his own executive jurisdiction. Such persons must obtain their seats by undue influence; and when elected combine with other dependant persons to vote the constitution a dead letter. One of the most violent partisans of the government was made Collector of the Customs at the port of Brockville, while the present Legislature were in session last year, and was not even sent back to his constituents, but continued to sit and vote as before.

Taxation without  
Representation.

The largest portion of the taxes and duties levied on the people have been imposed without even the appearance of asking their consent; and the proceeds, as well as the greater part of the other revenues, continue to be appropriated contrary to their wishes, and to purposes they would never sanction. Even in cases where a tax or an appropriation of money is subjected to a vote of the House of Assembly, it is often carried by a majority of members representing a minority of the classes entitled to share in the representation. The House is occasionally asked to grant a few thousand pounds for the support of the Civil Government, but this is merely for form's sake. Sometimes years elapse without any such request being made. Indeed, if the people would submit, the Government could go on for a century independent of a popular vote.

Standing Armies.

Standing Armies are kept among us in time of peace, without the consent of our legislatures; the military is not only independent of and superior to the civil power, but also the chief stay and dependence of those who use a delegated authority to oppress and injure us. Late occurrences in Montreal and elsewhere give a colour of truth to the assertion often made in Canada that bands of armed men are upheld among us, less for the purpose of affording protection to the people than of coercing them. Supported by the military, the crown and the legislature claim our allegiance, but neither afford protection to the lives and property, nor secure the liberty of the subject.

Education.

The progress of Education is obstructed. The Direction of Public Instruction is in general placed in the hands of those whose interest it is to keep the great body of the people in ignorance.

Trade.

The Trade of the Colony with other parts of the world is subjected to a multitude of vexatious and impolitic regulations and prohibitions, enacted without any reference to the Colonists, their wishes or interests. ~~We are oppressed by a weight of commercial monopoly, which on the one hand~~ suffer great losses in their intercourse with foreign nations, in order, as some say, to promote Canadian Interests. We are desirous to be delivered from the injuries as well as the supposed benefits attending these monopolies.

Inefficient  
Legislation.

Enactments the most wholesome and necessary for the public good, laws anxiously desired by the country, and calculated to promote the welfare of its inhabitants, are continually refused the sanction of the Executive and of the Councils dependent thereon.

Among the multitude of wise and salutary measures thus rejected since your Petitioner first entered the Legislature, may be enumerated: Bills,

For securing to the people a fair and impartial Trial by Jury.

For rendering the Administration of Justice more effectual and less expensive.

For the Encouragement of Education.

For rendering the Representative Branch of the Legislature more independent of Executive Influences, and for procuring a more fair and equal Representation of the People in the Assembly.

For abolishing the Law of Primogeniture, (which exists nowhere else in North America,) and for settling for the more equal Distribution of the real Estate of Persons dying intestate.

For a better Regulation of the three hundred Township Incorporations of the Colony.

For the Improvement of the Roads.

Providing that no Person should be liable to punishment for Publishing the Truth from good motives and for justifiable purposes.

For allowing the accused, in all Criminal Prosecutions, the benefit of full Defence by Counsel.

And for appointing Commissioners to consider important Matters of mutual Interest with Lower Canada.

The Legislative  
Council.

In these and many other Bills the Legislative Council have served as a screen to take from the Colonial Office, and the General Officer commanding the forces, the odium of cautiously baulking the public expectation and frustrating the wishes of the country. This council is composed of officers of the Government, pensioners of the Crown, priests of the churches of Rome and England, collectors of the Excise revenues, and other persons whose subservience has been sufficiently proved. It has never acquired the public confidence; it has never deserved it.

British Colonial  
Expenditure.

The Annual Expenditure occasioned to England by the present mode of Government in the North American Colonies has been estimated at about three millions sterling, inclusive of the tax occasioned by the discriminating duties on timber—this is in time of peace. Even if no return were made to the colonists in merchandize, the whole exports of British America to all the rest of the world would scarcely amount to this sum—and as for the territorial revenue accruing to Britain it is not worth naming.

The Petitions of the people of Lower Canada to their Government, and of the House of Assembly of that Province to the King and Parliament, show that most of the evils of which we complain they also are afflicted with; and that they seek the same simple remedy—the power of "self-government." The other North American Provinces doubtless feel in a greater or lesser degree the pressure of a Colonial system unsuitable to the liberality of the age in which we live.

The Colonies con-  
trasted with the  
United States.

The majority of the North American Colonists are neither of British birth nor descent—nor are they members of the Established Churches of England or of Scotland. British America is not a country for splendid costly Governments—its inhabitants evidently have no wish for them. The people of Upper Canada are in view of the United States, in daily intercourse with its citizens; they are the same race of men, speaking one language; they see the people on their adjoining frontier thriving and contented under domestic Governments instituted for the common benefit and protection; and they are persuaded that it is the wish of the British nation that they should have no just cause to envy the condition of their neighbours. In Ohio, New York, and Vermont, the military (of whom there are very few) are seen in strict subordination to the civil power—the laws are known to be a faithful expression of the public will—the penal code is humane and merciful—the judiciary are independent, and the people satisfied with the administration of justice—the taxes are raised, and public expenditures appropriated only according to law—the public functionaries require neither extravagant incomes nor burthensome pensions to induce them to fulfil their several duties—population, wealth well distributed, and the value of real estate rapidly increase—to all the citizens are ensured the blessings of education—and, without establishing any one sect over the others, a suitable maintenance is obtained for the ministers of religion from the voluntary contributions of their several congregations.

The best if not the  
only means of pro-  
moting the pros-  
perity of Upper  
Canada.

Your Petitioner humbly submits, that unless the people of Upper Canada shall be entrusted with an influence in the management of their own affairs something like that which prevails in the adjoining country, and the burthen of any disadvantageous comparison which they may draw, thereby thrown upon themselves, the difficulties which now surround the Colonial government will speedily be multiplied. Under a frugal Administration the value of landed estate in Upper Canada would be greatly increased, and the settlement of the country much facilitated by a numerous and intelligent class of capitalists, who will neither entrust