

I will not believe that any successful Opposition to the Confirmation of this Bill by Her Majesty will be allowed to prevail; but as I am informed that Representations may be made at home with that View, I shall beg to send in this Despatch a short Account of the Manner in which this Question has for Years past been treated in this Country, as illustrative of the Advantage which the Settlement now arrived at by the Legislature holds out, as contradistinguished from all previous Decisions.

No. 1.
The Right Hon.
C. P. Thomson
to
Lord J. Russell,
22d January 1840.

I need not advert to the early History of Disputes on this Subject, until the Years 1823-24, when a Motion was made in the House of Assembly on the Subject by Mr. Morris, and an Address to the Throne, praying for the Recognition of the Right of the Church of Scotland to share with the Church of England in the Reserves. In 1825 an Act having been passed (6 Geo. IV. Cap. 75.) by the Imperial Legislature, enabling the Crown to sell a Portion of the Reserves in this Province to the Canada Company, and to set apart other Lands in lieu of them for the Church, an Address was adopted in the House of Assembly on the 27th of January 1826, by a Majority of 14 to 8, deprecating any further Appropriation of Clergy Reserves, and concluding in the following Terms:—

“ We further most humbly represent, most Gracious Sovereign, that the lands set apart in this Province for the Maintenance and Support of a Protestant Clergy, ought not to be enjoyed by any one Denomination of Protestants to the Exclusion of their Christian Brethren of other Denominations equally conscientious in their respective Modes of worshipping God, and equally entitled, as dutiful and loyal Subjects, to the Protection of Your Majesty’s benign and liberal Government. We therefore humbly hope it will, in Your Majesty’s Wisdom, be deemed expedient and just, that not only the present Reserves, but that any Funds arising from the Sales thereof, should be devoted to the Advancement of the Christian Religion generally, and the Happiness of Your Majesty’s Subjects of whatever Denomination; or, if such Application or Distribution should be deemed expedient, that the Profits arising from such Appropriation should be applied to the Purposes of Education, and the general Improvement of this Province.”

The Earl of Bathurst having, in reply to this Address, stated, that the House of Assembly had misunderstood the Intention of the Act in question, “ which had not for its Object any Increase of the Amount of the Reserves specially allotted by the Imperial Parliament for the Established Church,” the House of Assembly proceeded to pass, by a Majority of 29 to 4, a Series of Resolutions, among which the following are the most important:—

“ *Resolved*,—That the Construction given to the Imperial Act which appropriates the Clergy Reserves to Individuals connected with the Church of England, and the Determination of the Clergy of that Church to withhold from all other Denominations of Protestants residing within the Province the Enjoyment of any Part of the Benefit arising or which may arise from the Sales so set apart, call for the immediate Attention of the Provincial Legislature to a Subject of such vital Interest to the Public in general.

“ *Resolved*,—That a comparatively small Proportion of the Inhabitants of Upper Canada are Members of the Church of England, and therefore ought not, in Justice, to desire the sole Enjoyment by their Clergy of all the Advantages which these Lands present, to the Exclusion of their Fellow Subjects, although equally loyal and firm in their Attachment to His Majesty’s Government and the Constitution.

“ *Resolved*,—That in a thinly inhabited Country such as Upper Canada, where the Means of moral Instruction to the Poor are not easily obtained, it is the bounden Duty of the Parliament to afford every Assistance within its Power towards the Support of Education.

“ *Resolved*,—That the present Provision for the Support of District and Common Schools is quite inadequate to the Wants of the People, and ought, by every reasonable Exertion, to be increased, so as to place within the Reach of the poorest Inhabitant the Advantages of a decent Education.

“ *Resolved*,—That it is the Opinion of the great Proportion of the People of this Province, that the Clergy Lands, in place of being enjoyed by the Clergy of an inconsiderable Part of the Population, ought to be disposed of, and the Proceeds of their Sale applied to increase the Provincial Allowance for the Support of District and Common Schools, and the Endowment of a