

## 16 PAPERS *relative to the* REMOVAL of the SEAT of GOVERNMENT,

### CANADA.

to enlist. They were ready to suffer whatever odium might for a time be cast on the movers in such a project; but they were resolved to do nothing which could cause civil commotion or personal calamity. Prepared to maintain the right of every people to choose that government which they believe most calculated to promote their own happiness and prosperity, they would not ask assent to any proposition which, followed out, might bring those who thought with them into armed conflict with those who differed from them. Conscious of obeying no other motives than those springing from patriotism disinterested and sincere, it was yet not without some hesitation that they committed themselves to a course which, although just and lawful, might divide them from many of their fellow-subjects, and from associations long endeared to them. The vast interest at stake—the welfare of themselves, their fellow-countrymen, and their posterity—urged them to proceed; and the favourable reception accorded to the expression of their opinion, has shown that they did not make a false estimate of the circumstances by which they were surrounded, nor of the good sense, justice, and liberality of the people of Great Britain. If we refer for a moment to the condemnation passed on the address by certain public writers of this province, (who, we are convinced, do not express the sentiments of the great body of the people,) we do so in no spirit of triumph. But it is of importance, for the advancement of the change we seek, to keep steadily before the public of Canada the fact, that this condemnation has not been confirmed by those in whose behalf it was professedly pronounced. Men in this colony, who arrogated the right of speaking for the Government and people of Great Britain, declared that we asked an impossibility, something to which Great Britain would never consent, which she would put down at all costs, even at that of bloodshed. They even urged the infliction of punishment—such as arbitrary power is able to visit on the guiltless expression of opinion without waiting to learn if those in whose behalf they would persecute, were really offended. We now stand in a totally different position from that which was occupied by the signers of the original address. The most influential organs of public opinion in the mother-country, as well as the understood organs of its Government, have spoken with as much distinctness as was possible in reply to an unofficial demand. We now know with certainty that for which we had before only well-founded belief—that the people of Great Britain acknowledge the right of the inhabitants of this province to choose for themselves, and to establish the government which they deem best adapted to secure prosperity, and comfort the greatest number. We here place a few of these declarations on record, not as our title to rights which we did not possess before, but as valuable acknowledgments of their existence:—

*(From the London Times, October 31.)*

“There was a time when so singular a document as this would have exposed its authors to the penalties of high treason, and the colony in which it was broached to the calamities of civil war; when every Englishman would have boiled with indignation at the presumption which complained of English dominion, and at the temerity which proposed to carry the presumption of language into action. But those days have passed away. We have been taught wisdom by experience; and the most valuable, as well as the most costly of our lessons, has been taught by the barren issue of a precipitate conflict with a province, which from remonstrances proceeded to rebellion, and crowned rebellion with independence. We should not go to war for the sterile honour of maintaining a reluctant colony in galling subjection; we should not purchase an unwilling obedience by an outlay of treasure or of blood. If, indeed, with colonial dependence or independence there were indissolubly bound up metropolitan prosperity or decay; if it were tolerably clear that the preservation of our colonial empire would ensure the preservation of metropolitan greatness, and that the latter would wane with the extinction of the former—then such suggestions as the Montreal Address contains would find no place in the discussions, no sympathy in the feelings, of the people in England. They would one and all identify their own interests and prosperity with that which their forefathers were content to regard for and by itself, viz., the supremacy of English power. But the difference between them and their forefathers is, that they will count and ponder on that more vulgar balance of profit and loss which was forgotten by the generation which hailed the commencement and lamented the conclusion of the great American war. Is the retention of Canada profitable, will its loss be hurtful, to England? is the question which Englishmen of the present day will put to themselves, as the converse of this question is that which Canadians are already discussing on their side. . . . Meanwhile—ere this question be solved—let us congratulate ourselves on the reflection that the document which we have quoted proves that the political training which England gives to her colonists is one which need neither make them ashamed of her, nor her of them; and that the future which awaits men thus trained can never be obscure nor dishonourable.”

*(From the London Times, November 2.)*

“We retract nothing that we have said on the tone, the temper, and the gravity of the document. By whomsoever it was proposed, by whomsoever concocted, it reflects great credit on the skill, tact, and adroitness of its authors.”

*(From the London Weekly Dispatch.)*

“This movement is a fine and cheering example which is wonderfully well-timed for the world's instruction. Here is no bluster and bravado. No vituperations are uttered for past wrongs. No appeal is made to the god of battles. A violent separation is not proposed; nor even one which shall be involuntary on the part of Great Britain. We are treated like