

CANADA.
No. 2.

(No. 38.)

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COPY of a DESPATCH from the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE
to Earl GREY.

Government House, Toronto, March 15, 1851.

(Received April 7, 1851.)

(Answered June 13, 1851, No. 609, page 18.)

My LORD,

I HAVE the honour to transmit Memorials addressed to Her Majesty the Queen and to the two Houses of the Imperial Parliament by the Presbytery of Kingston in connexion with the Church of Scotland, on the subject of the Canadian Clergy Reserves, with a memorandum on the statement contained in these Memorials furnished to me by the Honourable Mr. Price, one of the members of the Executive Council of this province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ELGIN AND KINCARDINE.

The Right Hon. Earl Grey,
&c. &c. &c.

Encl. 1 in No. 2.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

Unto the QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Memorial of the Reverend the Presbytery of Kingston (Canada West), in
connexion with the Church of Scotland.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,*

THAT by the piety and munificence of His late Majesty King George III. a grant of lands throughout this province, called the Clergy Reserves, was set apart for the support of a Protestant clergy.

That your Memorialists and the church to which they belong were for many years excluded from a participation in this grant, on the plea that these reserves were specially and solely intended for the support of the clergy in connexion with the Church of England. That a decision was pronounced by the twelve judges of England, by which the clergy of the Church of Scotland were declared to be entitled to a share of the reserves.

That in the year 1837 an Act was passed by the Imperial Parliament, and sanctioned by the Sovereign, providing for the final settlement of the question, according to the terms of the preamble of the said Act, wherein it is declared, that "it is expedient to provide for the final disposition of the lands called Clergy Reserves in Canada."

That the adjustment then effected has hitherto given general satisfaction to the loyal, well-disposed, and Protestant inhabitants of the province, and has been found to be productive of much good, in the support of religion in poor and thinly-settled localities, where, without such a provision, a regular supply of Divine Service and a settled ministry could not be maintained. That by these reserves a provision has been made for the support of religion neither infringing upon the rights nor affecting the interests of any portion of Your Majesty's subjects.

That your Memorialists have perceived, with deep regret, that an address to the Imperial Parliament has been lately adopted by the House of Assembly, having for its object the diversion of the Clergy Reserves from the support of religion altogether, to that of secular education, from which religion is industriously excluded.

That the said address in its leading principles was carried by a very slender majority in the House of Assembly, and of that majority the greater number are Roman Catholics, whose object is to subvert all Protestant religious institutions; and that it was never concurred in by nor submitted to the Legislative Council.

That the House of Assembly, which now seeks to alienate the reserves set apart for the support of a Protestant clergy, has lately granted Acts of incorporation to numerous bodies of Roman Catholics, conferring on them extensive privileges, and entitling them to hold fixed property to an enormous value.

That the object of the present attempt by the House of Assembly is to despoil the Church of Scotland and other Protestant religious bodies of any participation in the fund and lands specially devoted and appropriated "for the maintenance of religion and the advancement of knowledge within the province of Canada," and thereby to withdraw from religion that support which is so essential for its maintenance and extension in the present state of this country, and which your Memorialists regard it as the first duty of a Christian state at all times to afford.

That the present attempt is likely to inflict a serious injury on the peace of this province, by opening up such an important religious question for fresh discussion; that if successful it

* Similar Memorials addressed to the Houses of Lords and Commons.