

her efforts, and furnishing the proper attention and nourishment for the prosperity of the tree. In order to effect this, observation and experiments are necessary; and ordinary care and attention to the method prescribed above, will be sufficient to accomplish our purpose.

COLONIAL.

LOWER CANADA—LORD GOSFORD'S SPEECH.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
Tuesday, 26th Oct'r.

This day at one o'clock, His Excellency the Governor in Chief came down in state to the Legislative Council Chamber, and being seated on the throne, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod was sent down to the House of Assembly to command their attendance before His Excellency, and the House being come up His Excellency was pleased to open the second session of the Fifteenth Provincial Parliament with the following Speech:

*Gentlemen of the Legislative Council,
Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,*

It is in no ordinary circumstances that I meet you, and consequences of vast importance depend on the impression you may receive from my words. Dissentions have almost arrested the course of Government. The supplies required for carrying into execution the laws by which society is held together, have now for a considerable period been withheld. The most urgent and conflicting statements of numerous grievances made by adverse parties, have been borne to the Throne of His Majesty; but accompanied with expressions of an apprehension that the Ministers of the Crown might not have that practical and local knowledge of the Province, which is necessary for the discernment of the most appropriate remedies. I am sent amongst you therefore, not only as your Governor, but as the head of a Commission upon which the task is imposed of enquiring fully, and upon the spot, into the complaints, which have been made; and of offering to the King, and to the councils by which the Throne is surrounded, the deliberate conclusions of the Commissioners.

There are some cases in which the Executive power of the Government will of itself be sufficient to apply a remedy; in others, though, he cannot act by himself, yet with the help of one or both branches of the Provincial Legislature, he may effectually accomplish what is required; there are others in which the Laws and Institutions of the United Kingdom make it impossible for us, without the enactments or sanction of the authorities in England, to effect what is asked; so that if we were to act we would be acting unlawfully, if we were to make Laws, they would be binding upon no one.

If these distinctions are borne in mind whilst I state to you the commands I have received from his Majesty, and the policy to which I shall adhere, I am confident that I shall satisfy all impartial minds of the magnanimity and wisdom with which His Majesty has listened to your complaints; of the resolution which has been taken to redress every grievance under which any class of His Majesty's Canadian subjects may labour, and of my own determination to do all of which I am capable, in giving effect to those generous and wise intentions. As Governor, I will execute with alacrity, impartiality and firmness, whatever I am competent to do of myself; as head of the Provincial Legislature, I will zealously co-operate with its other members in the redress of every evil they may find occasion to correct; as Commissioner, I pledge myself that a prompt but careful examination will be made of those still weightier matters which depend upon the highest powers of the empire; and that hav-

ing with the most anxious thought and solemn deliberation, arrived at our conclusions, the Commissioners will state them with an earnestness of purpose, calculated to give additional force to the authority which they ought to derive from having been deemed worthy of so grave a charge.

In what I shall now proceed to communicate, it is not my design, nor am I authorised by His Majesty, to condemn or applaud generally the conduct of any one; the abatement of dissentions, and the conciliation of adverse parties, are the objects at which I aim: the good will of the Canadians of all ranks and classes; the confidence of the representatives of the people, the respect of all branches and members of the Government, are what I ardently desire to earn and to retain, and in this I hope to succeed, because I am conscious that my intentions deserve it. With as much freedom from fear or favour as I have promised to act, I will now speak of the things of which you have complained, and of the remedies which I hope to see applied.

It is affirmed that the French Origin of the majority of the inhabitants of Lower Canada, has been made a pretext for excluding them from office and employment, and for retaining them in a state of political inferiority. I disclaim on the part of his Majesty, and of the British People, so ungenerous a motive. Having long ago become a part of the family of British subjects, our constitution recognises nothing, as a mark of disfavour, which may denote the estrangement of their ancestors in a former century. It regards nothing in the present generation as demerit, save misconduct. The circumstances which first united this country with the British Empire, must necessarily have occasioned for some time afterwards an exclusion of its prior inhabitants from offices of government, and the bias thus unavoidably received may in some degree have influenced, even to the present day, the course of affairs. Neither is it possible, in the distribution of political offices at any time, or in any circumstances, to be guided entirely by a reference to the numbers of individuals who may be comprised in this, or in that class. But I assure you that in this respect, my instructions enjoin upon me the utmost impartiality, and an entire disregard of distinctions derived from difference of origin. Fitness for the trust is the criterion to which mainly, if not entirely, I am to look,—and I do not hesitate to avow the opinion, that in every country, to be acceptable to the great body of the people is one of the most essential elements for public station.

So great is the solicitude of his Majesty to take the most effectual security against the occurrence of any abuse in the distribution of His patronage, that he has commanded the adoption of arrangements designed to elicit a far more particular account than heretofore, of the exercise of this part of His delegated authority in Lower Canada; and he has been further pleased to direct that all offices in His gift, of which the emoluments shall exceed a stated sum, shall not be granted except under the Public Seal of the Province, in pursuance of warrants to be issued for that purpose by His Majesty.

Complaint is also made that incompatible offices are in some cases held by the same person. In whatsoever degree this grievance may be found to exist, his Majesty has signified to me his expectation that it should be completely remedied. Commencing with the highest, I have formed the opinion that it is neither right nor consistent with the wholesome separation, and independence of the principal bodies of the Government, and with the dignity of their members, that out of the limited number of Executive Councillors in this Province, several should hold offices under the Legisla-

tive Council and House of Assembly. I desire however that it may be understood that no dissatisfaction with the conduct of the members of the Executive Council, nor any mark whatever of His Majesty's displeasure is intended to be conveyed. The immediate retirement of those gentlemen who prefer to retain their appointments under the Legislative body, might embarrass or interrupt the proceedings of the Court of Appeals, but I felt it my duty to impart to them the conclusion to which my mind had come: I shall communicate the same opinion to the proper authorities at home, and I entertain no doubt that as soon as their places can be supplied, according to the forms prescribed by law, effect will be given to the wish they have expressed to relinquish their seats in the Executive Council. My views are not limited to these cases. No union of incompatible or incongruous offices will be willingly acquiesced in by me: but I wish to be understood as speaking of offices of which the duties cannot conveniently or with propriety be discharged by the same person. In some instances, the division of offices is merely nominal, and the duties are more conveniently discharged by one person, than they can be by two. In other instances, the salary of the office is so small, or its duty so seldom called for, that without a union with some other, the employment could only be made acceptable to a competent person by the increase of emolument.

It is stated as a grievance that the Government has at various times refused to give the Legislature access to accounts, and other documents which were necessary for the prosecution of its enquiries, and that the Executive has not, in all cases, communicated, when requested, the despatches which have passed between the Colonial Department and the local government. His Majesty's government fears that the Assembly may have been exposed to some inconvenience from this source. The rule which I am instructed to follow, is a freedom from all unnecessary reserve; I am commanded to withhold no information from the Provincial Legislature which can be communicated without a violation of confidence, or special detriment to the public service; and, in particular, I am to offer you the fullest assistance in investigating every thing connected with the revenue and with finance. There is scarcely any document within the power of the Government, which it will not always be willing to lay before you, except those confidential communications with the authorities at home, or with its own officers here, which, it is obvious, could not be made public in all cases and at all seasons without extreme inconvenience. As an earnest of the sincerity of those intentions, I have given directions that a copy of the annual return, generally known as the Blue Book, should in future be presented to each branch of the Legislature; and since correct information on the statistics of the Province is an object of general importance, I invite your assistance in rendering all returns of this nature as accurate and as comprehensible as possible.

The two frequent reservation of bills for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure, and the delay in communicating the King's decision upon them, is a grievance of which His Majesty's Government are solicitous to prevent the recurrence. I shall consider the power of reserving Bills as a right to be employed not without much caution, nor except on some evident necessity. His Majesty's Government also undertake on their part to bestow the most prompt attention, on every question of this nature, which may be brought under their notice; and especially, that no measure having for its object the institution in the Provinces of any Colleges or Schools for the advancement of Christian Knowledge or Sound Learning shall hereafter be unnecessarily deferred.