

and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Lower Canada, and of stating the dangerous consequences that might follow thereupon, if not speedily removed; but as I have received no intimation that my letter has reached your hands, I am induced, in order to guard against its possible miscarriage, to hand you a copy of it herewith enclosed.

I am the more desirous of doing this, as every event that has occurred in that province since the date of my said letter to you, tends to widen the breach, and to alienate the affections of the French Canadians, who have hitherto been justly considered the most loyal subjects (without any exception) of His Majesty; I feel it my duty, therefore, to repeat my former conviction of the urgent necessity of a speedy and radical change in the system which has much too long prevailed of governing the Canadas, and more especially the invaluable province of Lower Canada; for, constituted as things now are in that country, in the event of war, or invasion on the part of their neighbours, no effectual resistance could rationally be expected from the French Canadians who compose more than nine tenths of the population. The other tenth part, who are called English, consist of American loyalists, American citizens, and emigrants from the United Kingdom—chiefly from Scotland; and from whose insignificant numbers and composition no effectual resistance could possibly be made to an invading enemy. And yet, small and unimportant as this part of the population of Lower Canada is, they have in a great measure (ever since the American Rebellion) monopolized every place of honour and emolument under the Government, to the exclusion of the French Canadians, who, if justice were done to their abilities, education, loyalty, and importance in respect of influence with the whole of their virtuous countrymen, would fill at least nine tenths of all these places. If this part of the subject were to undergo a fair discussion it would naturally be asked, Who are the chief justices of the province? Who the attorney-general? Who the solicitor-general? Who the judge-advocate? Who president of the two councils Legislative and Executive? Who compose the majority of the members of these councils? Who are the sheriffs? Are they French Canadians? Oh no! they are a conquered people, and French, and not fit to be trusted. American loyalists and others must therefore have almost the exclusive preference of all places of honour and profit. Lower Canada now abounds with young French Canadian subjects of brilliant talents, cultivated by the best education; and who, from their respectability and influence are qualified to fill every situation in the province with credit and honour to themselves, and benefit to the colony and mother country. They very deservedly enjoy the most unlimited confidence of all their virtuous countrymen, who would rise to a man—and I might almost say to a woman—in defence of the province, if encouraged and led on by them. But how can such devotion be reasonably expected from men circumstanced as they are under the present administration of things in that colony? Fortunately for the best interests of this country, the French Canadians are a virtuous people, and wish to remain so, (distinct from the mixed classes around them), and enjoy in peace and quietness their religion, language, and manners; and happily for us, they consider they have a better chance of so doing with British connection than with American. On this account, and for the advantages enjoyed by them as British colonies, they will adhere to Britain, if its Government have the wisdom and good policy to do them justice. I am still, therefore, of opinion that they should have every privilege of independence granted them consistent with their remaining colonies; and that our other North American colonies should also be promised to be placed on a similar footing, so soon as their population reached a certain number. Under so very liberal a system of government, when war with their neighbours takes place, we would be more likely (if so disposed) to colonize their neighbouring states than lose any of our present North American colonies. Unless that some arrangement is made, and soon, that will satisfy and tranquilize the minds of His Majesty's French Canadian subjects of Lower Canada, whenever war takes place between this country and the United States, we will most assuredly lose all our North American colonies. They will be added to the stripes for the back of John Bull. It is not yet too late to avert this calamity.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Sir, your most obedient servant,

(signed) Wm. Parker.

The Right Honourable  
William Huskisson,  
&c. &c. &c.

DID you sign a petition lately presented to the House of Commons from the Canadian merchants residing in London?—No, I did not; it is a very improper one, in my opinion.

Why do you think so?—To unite 1,500 miles of country in one province would be the most inconvenient thing that could be; and it is a most insulting measure to the French Canadians; the object of it appears to me to be only to overpower them in the House of Representatives, and it would not be attained by that means. In Upper Canada it is said that there are very able republican members, and if they sent them down to Lower Canada as representatives, they would be very apt to republicanize the French members, who are not republicans, but loyal, and in my opinion, even ultra royal in their present sentiments and wishes.

Do you know any Canadian merchants now resident in London who entertain the same opinion upon that point as yourself?—Perhaps not.

How long is it since you have been in Canada?—Not since 1811.

You have described what you call the English population, by which it is presumed you mean the population from Great Britain, as being unsettled and transitory?—Not unsettled; but the French Canadians do not look upon them as settled; the educated part of their own population, being born in Canada, remain there; the English part of the inhabitants remain there or not, according to circumstances.

According to what circumstances are they there?—They are there for the purposes of trade.

Are they in the habit of investing their money there in purchasing lands?—Some few have done so.

Can you state why it is that only a few are disposed to do so?—There are not many that have money to invest; there are but few of them that make money. I believe that since I went out in 1780 there are not half a dozen houses in Montreal and Quebec that were in existence at that time.

Do you believe that in the English population there is an indisposition to acquire property and to settle in Canada?—I cannot speak to that; I think that if they made money they would be more inclined, perhaps, to return to Europe.

To what circumstance do you attribute that?—That if they had fortunes they would enjoy them better in England than in America. Canada is a very cold country, there is one half of the year that they are locked up with ice.

Is there any other reason than the climate which renders the persons emigrating from this country indisposed to acquire property in Lower Canada?—They would like to have the confidence of the French Canadians; they would like to represent them in the Legislature; and the French Canadians have not that confidence in them, from the circumstances I have mentioned, that they have in their own countrymen, who are numerous and well-educated men.

Do the English settlers dislike the state of the law and tenure of property in Canada?—Perhaps they would like some other tenure better; I do not know; some of them, I suppose, would prefer other tenures.

Have you ever held landed property in Canada?—I have land that has come to me in payment of debts.

From your acquaintance with Lower Canada, do you think that if the minds of the inhabitants of that province were quieted as to any apprehension of uniting them with the Upper Province, and if the present constitution was administered in a conciliatory manner, that that would be sufficient to make things go on smoothly?—Yes; I think it would, unless there was an invasion on the part of their neighbours. But they have been so much teased and tormented for the last 20 years that it must shake their confidence in their constitution; and I question almost if even such palliations would be sufficient. It would tranquilize while there is peace with America, but it would require the exertions of every man in the country, in co-operation with any force that this country might furnish, to defend

the colonies against the Americans. I do not think that 50,000 British troops would keep the two Canadas for two campaigns.

You mean without the hearty co-operation of the French Canadians?—Yes; with their co-operation 10,000 men would be quite sufficient to drive out the Americans.

What system of government towards the Canadians is it that you would recommend?—I would give the whole civil government of the four British North American colonies, Upper Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, to the inhabitants, under such vetos and restrictions as might be deemed proper with colonies, the fewer, however, and more liberal these were, the better, and keep them as military and commercial stations, and give them all the privileges that they see their neighbours of the United States enjoy, and under which system they are so happy and prosperous.

Do you think it desirable to leave the Lower Province of Canada to the management and direction of the French Canadians?—Certainly; they are in my opinion the best subjects that this country has in any part of the world.

Supposing that there exists on the part of persons emigrating from England any dislike of French institutions, would you think it desirable to take such steps as would remove the grounds of objection taken by the English, by letting them have in such parts of the country as they are disposed to settle English, laws and English institutions?—Not in Lower Canada; you could not have separate institutions in Lower Canada; the English are confined chiefly to the towns of Montreal, Quebec, and Three Rivers.

Are you aware that the land granted to the English, is granted upon a tenure similar to that on which land is granted in England?—In Lower Canada I think it ought not to be so; it is contrary to their capitulation, by which, I understand, they were to enjoy their laws as to landed and fixed property.

Do you also think that it would be contrary to good policy?—I think it would be contrary to good policy to infringe in the least the rights they capitulated for.

Do you think that the unsettled lands that now exist in Lower Canada should be left to the descendants of the French Canadians to occupy them as they may hereafter be able to do; or that it would be wise to adopt such institutions as would encourage the settlement of individuals from this side of the water?—I would encourage the French Canadians, they are the only people you can depend upon; the population of the other provinces is of a mixed character (a great many loyal, brave and good men, no doubt, amongst them); the French Canadians are united in their origin (of which they are justly proud) in religion, in manners, and in virtue; they have a character to support, and they have always nobly supported it; whilst they were under the French government, they were the bravest subjects that France had; and with one sixth of their present number they gave the greatest opposition to the British army that they met with at the conquest in Canada. I am persuaded if the French Canadians had been as numerous at that time as they are now, we could not have wrested Canada from France, and if such had been the result, we would not now have the youthful, powerful and federative North American republic encroaching on us as they do at present. The French Canadians are reproached for not Anglifying themselves; Are the inhabitants of Jersey and Guernsey worse British subjects for having preserved their language, manners and Norman laws? or are they so reproached?—and yet I will boldly assert that Lower Canada, and other North American colonies, are of ten thousand times more vital importance to this empire than these islands are of. I consider them more than the right arm of the British Empire. I am convinced that if the French Canadians were double their present number, they would set at the union of America at defiance; they are the best subjects this country have.

For that reason you think it would be wise to let them have an opportunity of extending their numbers and their institutions over the whole of the Lower Province?—Certainly; you have no other chance of keeping your North American colonies but by that means; if you do not do it, you lose them as sure as ever you have an invasion on the part of America, and what then?—With the American republic one and indivisible from the Gulph of Mexico to Hudson's Bay, how would this empire be circumstanced in regard of ships, colonies, and commerce? This (in my humble opinion) most important and indeed most vital question deserves the most serious consideration of the British Legislature: once the North American Colonies lost, they are for ever.

Martis, 24<sup>e</sup>. die Junii, 1828.

James Stephen, junior, Esq. again called in; and Examined.

When you were last before the Committee, some questions were put to you with respect to the rents of the clergy reserves, have you been able to ascertain what is the gross amount of the rent actually received, and what are the net receipts?—I have with me an account, which I believe will answer that question with sufficient accuracy. In the province of Lower Canada the total quantity of Crown reserves is 488,645 acres, of which there are in lease for 21 years, 38,366 acres. The terms of the leases are, that upon a lot of 200 acres eight bushels of wheat, or 25s. per annum, are to be paid for the first seven years, 16 bushels of wheat, or 50s. per annum for the next seven years, and 24 bushels of wheat or 75s. per annum for the last seven years. The nominal revenue of these Crown reserves, upon the average of several years is 830l.; and the actual receipt is less than 30l. per annum. The total quantity of clergy reserves is 488,594 acres, of which 75,639 acres are granted in lease upon the same terms as the Crown reserves. The nominal rent of the clergy reserves is 930l. per annum, and the actual receipt, upon the average of the last three years, is 50l. per annum. These statements are made on the authority of a letter addressed by Mr. Cochran (the private secretary of Lord Dalhousie) to Mr. Wilmot Horton, of the 20th March 1826. It is the latest account on the subject in the Colonial Office.

Can you account for the great difference between the nominal rent and the net receipt?—It is accounted for by the great difficulty of collecting the rents, and by the tenants absconding. The resident clergy act as local agents in the collection of the rents. It appears that the sum of 175l. has been deducted for the expenses of management, and that at the date of Mr. Cochran's letter there was in the hands of the receiver-general a sum of 250l., the gross produce of the whole revenue of this estate.

The Committee are informed that an arrangement was made with the Canada Company for disposing of a considerable portion of the clergy reserves, and that that arrangement has practically failed; is there any other arrangement in operation to dispose of a portion of the clergy reserves, excepting that which you have informed the Committee of, which exists under the power which the Clergy Corporation possess of leasing a portion of them?—The statute 7th and 8th Geo. IV. c. 62, authorizes the sale of one fourth of the clergy reserves, provided that in no one year more than 100,000 acres be sold.

What persons are directed to carry that sale into effect?—They are to be sold by the Governor, acting under instructions issued by His Majesty, through the Secretary of State. Mr. Peter Robinson is appointed in Upper Canada as the Agent to carry this power of sale into effect. I believe, but am not certain, that in Lower Canada Mr. Felton has the same appointment. The proceeds of the sales are to be invested in the public funds of this country, and the interest arising from the investment, after defraying the expenses of the sale, is to be applied to the improvement of the unsold land, or for the purposes for which the land itself was originally reserved.

Have they the power of selling, subject to lease, any portion of those lands that have been leased?—They will, I understand, sell wild land only.

It has been suggested to the Committee that it might be desirable to invest the Ecclesiastical Corporation with a power of letting leases for a much larger term than 21 years, even for the term of 100 years; if they were invested with such a power would it not conflict with the power of sale granted to the Governor under the Act you have alluded to?—The power of granting long leases would of course have a tendency to withdraw from