

The Anglican Bishop of Quebec continued to press on the Ministry the necessity for a new church for the use of his fellow religionists and on the 24th of July, 1799, the Duke of Portland wrote to Milnes on the subject, commenting on a private letter from the Bishop, dated the 15th of April. He says:—

The first point stated in the Bishop's letter is the inconvenience which the inhabitants of Quebec have experienced from the want of a proper church at Quebec ever since the burning of that which belonged to the convent of the Recollets.

The necessity of building a Metropolitan church at the seat of Government is self evident, and, as the site of the late church of the Recollets is a proper situation for that purpose, you are hereby authorized to appropriate that ground to it and moreover to apply annually a sum not exceeding £400 out of the Provincial Revenues towards its erection. (Q. 82, p. 289.)

It was not however till 1804 that the Cathedral Church was consecrated.

Returning from this digression to the affairs of Upper Canada. Another important matter was the effort to get rid of slavery during the same session of the Legislature. The members who had resisted a tax on land to meet the expenses of the Legislature also resisted the attempt to get rid of slavery as involving a burden on the land. On this point, Simcoe says:—

The greatest resistance was to the Slave Bill, many plausible arguments of the dearness of labour and the difficulty of obtaining servants to cultivate lands were brought forward. Some possessing negroes knowing that it was very questionable whether any subsisting law did authorise slavery, and having purchased several taken in war by the Indians at small prices, wished to reject the Bill entirely. Others were desirous to supply themselves by allowing the importation for two years. The matter was finally settled by undertaking to secure the property already obtained upon condition that an immediate stop should be put to the importation and that slavery should be gradually abolished. (Q. 279—2, pp. 336, 349).

Preparations for internal improvements are very fully reported by Simcoe, who asserted vigorously the right of the Lieut.-Governors of the Province to have the complete control of all provincial affairs, including the management of the Indians, and the establishment of a Provincial Marine, on which subjects he had some acrimonious correspondence after the return of Lord Dorchester in the autumn of 1793. The explorations towards lake Huron, towards the river La Tranche, (now Thames,) towards the Bay of Quinté, the report on sites selected for towns, with the flattering prospects of some, not fulfilled, whilst others, not thought of, have sprung up and grown in wealth and population, can all be traced in the correspondence. Among the events of local interest is the reference made by Simcoe in a letter to Mr. Dundas dated 20th September 1793, to his changing the name of Toronto into that of York. In this he says "that the place was named with due celebrity on the arrival of the news that the Duke of York had obtained possession of the camp of Famars." (Q. 279—2, p. 487). There is, however, a curious confusion of dates. On the 23rd of August, in a letter dated York (late Toronto) to Mr. Dundas, Simcoe acknowledges receipt of a dispatch of the 2nd of May, and continues:—

On the 22nd of this month I received your dispatch of the 2nd of April informing me of the successes of Europe against the aggressions of the French nation; this joyful news had reached this province through the United States and could not fail of giving the greatest pleasure to all his Majesty's loyal subjects. (Q. 279—2, p. 283).

On the 22nd August is a letter similarly dated, namely York (late Toronto), addressed to Mr. King, Under Secretary, in which two dispatches are acknowledged, one of the 20th of February, and the other of the 3rd of April. (Q. 279—2, p. 280.)