

UPPER CANADA.

No. 1.

COPIES OF EXTRACTS of DESPATCHES from the SECRETARY OF STATE for the COLONIAL DEPARTMENT and Sir G. ARTHUR, K. C. H., relative to the CLERGY RESERVES in *Upper Canada*.

—No. 1.—

(No. 4.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Lord *Glenelg* to Lieutenant-Governor Sir *George Arthur*, K. C. H., dated Downing-street, 26 December 1837.

Sir,

AMONGST the questions to which your attention will be called upon your arrival in Upper Canada, one of the most important is that which relates to the provision for the maintenance and diffusion of Christian knowledge throughout the increasing population of the province.

No. 1.
Lord Glenelg to
Sir G. Arthur,
26 Dec. 1837.

This subject has recently engaged much of the public attention in Upper Canada, with reference to the recent beneficial appropriation of the lands set apart by the Act of 1791 for religious purposes, and known by the name of Clergy Reserves. It could scarcely be expected that the discussion of this question could fail to produce considerable controversy and excitement, or that its settlement could be accomplished without serious difficulty. I entertain, however, a confident hope that some plan may at an early period be agreed to, by which the difficulties which have hitherto opposed a satisfactory adjustment of the conflicting claims of various religious denominations may be removed, and an adequate provision be made for meeting, on comprehensive principles, the religious wants of the great body of the inhabitants.

I regret that the agitated question of the endowment of 57 rectories in the commencement of the year 1836 has introduced a new element of dissension. The correspondence which has taken place between Her Majesty's Government and your predecessor on this subject will place you fully in possession of the facts of this case. How far the view originally taken of that subject by the law officers of the Crown may be altered when they shall have maturely considered the explanations which have recently, for the first time, reached me, as to the grounds on which the Lieutenant-governor and Executive Council really proceeded, I am at present unable to state. In the meantime, however, before I can receive their Report, I think it right to acquaint you with the view which I at present entertain of the course which it may be desirable to pursue with reference to this subject.

The House of Assembly of Upper Canada, as appears from their Journals of the 9th February 1837, adopted a series of resolutions relative to these endowments, of which the sixth declared, "That this House regards as inviolable the rights acquired under the patents by which rectories have been endowed, and cannot therefore either invite or sanction any interference with the rights thus established." On the part of Her Majesty's Executive Government, I cannot hesitate to avow our entire adoption of the principle by which this resolution was dictated. Although the endowments of the rectories in the year 1836 did not take place with the previous concurrence or knowledge of the present Ministers of the Crown, yet, as they appear to have been made at least under a presumed authority from the Secretary of State, and as considerable time has now elapsed since the parties were put in possession of the lands, I should much regret to be compelled to disturb that settlement, or to dispossess the clergy