

be considered as the act of the whole, and must therefore, be in strict unison with their interests and feelings, to conciliate the regard, and secure the confidence, of the whole. It is a highly valuable political maxim in England, that "the king can do no wrong," but all measures of government, being considered to be pursued in consequence of the advice of the king's servants, his servants alone are personally responsible to the nation. But that maxim, my lord, so far from extending to the representative of Majesty in his remote provinces, is actually reversed; and the faults, negligences, and wrongs of a governor's servants, are, from the obvious situation of the case, imputed to him, and it is he, as well as they, that must be answerable for them to the people.

An instance of the same unpardonable negligence and levity as the one which has now called forth much public reprobation, occurred in July last; some slight notice of it was taken in the public papers of the day, but I need not tell your lordship that, at that time, there was no paper printed in this province, that would, or durst, make any remarks whatsoever, that might be considered as casting blame upon any one person in power, place, or even general repute. I considered too that, as it might have been a single instance of inattention, the awful consequences that might have ensued, would have served as a warning to your confidential servants, and prevented the recurrence of any thing similar.

I allude to the circumstances that the 21st of that month, being a Sunday, had been fixed on as the day until which the execution of eight condemned criminals, in the gaol of Montreal, had been respited, and that, although, it was well known that, although one or more of them might have been considered as proper objects to be made examples of, it was your lordship's gracious intention to extend the Royal clemency to some if not to all of them, yet the warrants for the execution being actually previously in the hands of the sheriff, no counter-order, no respite, was sent, no notice whatsoever was taken of them. In this instance the fortuitous inattention of those who respited the men, until a day which happened to be a Sunday, was the only chance that saved their lives; and the sheriff, most humanely, took upon himself the responsibility of not executing them, solely because Sunday was a *dies non* in law. Whether the pardons, or respites, which it was intended to grant to some of these men, had been signed by your lordship in due time, and committed to the charge of some officer of government to forward, without being forwarded; or whether, the person whose duty it was to have called your lordship's attention to the approaching execution-day of those poor wretches, had omitted to do so; is neither known, nor material; the effects were the same; the solemn march of the law was impeded; neither jus-