

began to look back upon what had already been done in Canada, and, perhaps, to find that the civil and religious institutions hitherto established in this great and extensive province, were by no means, either adequate to the just claims of a free people, or decidedly honourable to the pretensions of the mother country for all that is excellent in political jurisprudence. It must, indeed, be confessed, that the political establishments existing at this time in Canada, were merely formed as temporary arrangements in a new and unsettled country: but excuses were not wanting to palliate and prolong the duration of them. But however this may be, it is certain, that the conspiracy of some great political causes with the acknowledged destitution in Canada of a government suitable to its circumstances and magnitude, at once confirmed the opinion of the minister, and ripened his ideas with regard to this country into an absolute determination of re-modeling its constitution. As Montreal, no less than the Country at large, is deeply interested in this important era of our history, we cannot forbear to enter at some length, into its details.

When the province of Quebec was ceded by France to Great Britain, by the treaty of peace in 1763, a proclamation was issued, in which his Majesty promised, that measures should be taken for extending to the inhabitants, the benefits of the British constitution. Nothing, however, was done till the year 1774, when an act passed, "for making more effectual provision for the government of the province of Quebec."—This act was far from giving satisfaction, or answering its purpose; and it was now found to be, in many respects, inapplicable to the present state of the province. Mr. Pitt had for some time been endeavouring to frame a plan, better suited to existing circumstances, and as nearly analogous to the British Constitution, as the case would admit; and on the 25th of February, 1791, he presented the following message from his Majesty to the House of Commons;

GEORGE R.

"His Majesty thinks it proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that it appears to his Majesty, that it would be for the benefit of his Majesty's subjects in his province of Quebec, that the same should be divided into two separate provinces, to be called the province of Upper Canada, and the province of Lower Canada: and that it is accordingly his Majesty's intention so to divide the same, whenever his Majesty shall be enabled by act of Parliament to establish the necessary regulations for the government of the said provinces. His Majesty therefore recommends this object to the consideration of this House.

"His Majesty also recommends to this House to consider of such provisions as may be necessary to enable his Majesty to make a permanent appropriation of lands in the said provinces, for the support and maintenance of a Protestant clergy within the same, in proportion to such lands as have been already granted within the same by his Majesty; and it is his Majesty's desire, that such provision may be made, with respect to all future grants of land within the said provinces respectfully, as may best conduce to the same object, in proportion to such increase as may happen in the population and cultivation of the said provinces; and for this purpose, his Majesty consents, that such provisions or regulations may be made by this House, respecting all