

Humbly sheweth,

THAT your Petitioners have learnt with the greatest satisfaction that Your Majesty the Inhabitants of Quebec has taken into your gracious consideration the state of the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, with a view to adjust certain differences relating to matters of revenue complained of by the province of Upper Canada; and as it appears that Your Majesty's Government, in the course of its inquiry into the sources of these differences, has become satisfied of the necessity of some change being made in the constitutions of these provinces, but has postponed the adoption of final measures in order to give time to the people thereof to express their sentiments, your Petitioners beg leave humbly to approach your Majesty with a statement of various evils under which they have laboured for some years, and from which they have no hope of relief, except by the interposition of Your Majesty and the Imperial Parliament.

The experience of thirty years has now demonstrated the impolicy of the Act of the British Parliament, 31st Geo. 3, c. 31, by which the late province of Quebec was divided into the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. To this division your petitioners ascribe the present ineffective state of their Legislature, and the want of those necessary measures for diffusing throughout the whole population of the country feelings becoming their character as British subjects, and introducing that general spirit of improvement, which, encouraged by the commercial system, universally pervades and invigorates other British colonies. This division has created a difference of interest between the provinces in matters connected with revenue highly injurious to both, inevitably producing a spirit of dissension and animosity, and infusing into the Legislatures principles of a narrow and selfish policy, adverse to the general development of their resources, and in an especial manner to the improvement of the channels of intercourse between them; and it is essential here to notice, that nearly the whole of the revenue of the two Provinces arises from duties levied on merchandize imported at the port of Quebec, under laws enacted by the Legislature of the Lower Province. It has also, from the control which the geographical situation of the Lower Province enables it to exercise over the trade of the Canadas, placed the export trade of the Upper Province at its mercy, being subject to such regulations and restrictions at the shipping port as its Legislature may choose to impose. From this circumstance, and from the feeble attempts made to improve the grand natural channel of the Canadas, strikingly contrasted with the enterprise and energy evinced by the neighbouring state of New York in the rapid formation of canals, together with the indifference manifested on this subject by the Legislature of the Lower Province, your Petitioners have just reason for alarm, that if a similar system be persisted in, it may tend in a most injurious degree to increase the commercial intercourse of the Upper Province with the United States, and divert the enterprise and trade of its inhabitants into a foreign channel; and from these causes your Petitioners not only apprehend the immediate loss of beneficial trade, but that the gradual effect would be to interweave the interests of the Upper Canadians with those of the neighbouring States, thereby alienating their minds from the people of this province and weakening their affection for your Majesty's Government, notwithstanding their present known and tried loyalty.

The Legislature of this province has for a long time past been agitated by dissensions, and their deliberations so much interrupted thereby, that trade, agriculture, education and other objects of general interest have been neglected. There exists no law for the registry of lands and mortgages, so necessary for security in commercial transactions; no Insolvent Debtors Act; and your Petitioners have looked in vain for a law to provide for the unrepresented state of the townships, a fertile and valuable portion of this province, settled by inhabitants of British origin; of these Legislative enactments, and many others necessary to quicken the enterprise and industry of a commercial country, your Petitioners entertain little hope, until a re-union of the provinces shall have weakened the influence which has hitherto prevented their adoption in our statute book. The existence of this influence your Petitioners chiefly attribute to the impolitic division of these provinces; which, instead of rendering it the interest, as it is the duty, of every individual of the community to concur in measures to assimilate the whole population and to allay the jealousies naturally existing between the several classes, has unavoidably presented to the