

Quebec, into two provinces, with distinct and separate governments.

“ To enable your Majesty to form a correct opinion of the truth and justice of the foregoing facts, the consequence of which we, your Majesty’s loyal subjects of this district, in common with all the british part of the province, so oppressively feel; it may, perhaps, be in itself sufficient and conclusive to point out, that out of fifty members constituting the house of assembly of Lower Canada, one-fifth part only are of british origin or language, and that this branch of the legislature is almost exclusively returned by uneducated farmers and peasantry, always actuated upon by a few of the influencing leaders among their countrymen, thus forming a mass of influence, rarely, if ever exercised in unison with the wishes of the government, or of the british part of the community, insomuch that the progress of improvement and amelioration is greatly retarded;—the benefits of an immense and valuable emigration from the mother country altogether lost by discouragement, and commerce languid and unimportant.

“ A further conviction of the necessity of a reunion must, we presume, occur to your Majesty, from the utter impracticability of deriving any adequate means for an equable subdivision and participation of the revenue, to be derived from the import and transit of goods (for which Quebec alone can ever be the port of entry from the sea) capable of reconciling the interests of the divided provinces, in a satisfactory manner.”

Besides the passages quoted above, from the petition of the unionists at Montreal, were the following:—

“ In adverting to the injurious consequences arising from the division of the late province of Quebec, your petitioners cannot omit to notice more particularly the effect that measure has had in preventing the increase of the british population in Lower Canada, and the development of its resources. The predominance of the french population in the legislature has occasioned obstacles to the settlement of british emigrants that have not been surmounted; so that the vast increase of british population to have been expected, from this cause has been, in a great degree, prevented. The injury sustained in this particular, may be easily appreciated, when it is observed that, since the late american war, upwards of 80,000 souls (that is, a number equal to one-fourth of the actual french population) have found their way to this province from Great Britain and Ireland; and of those scarcely one-twentieth part remain within its limits, the rest, with the exception of a small number who have settled in Upper Canada, having been induced, by the foreign character of the country in which they had sought an asylum, and the discouragements they experienced, to try their fortune in the United States. The loss thus sustained is not confined to those who left the country, but comprises their connexions and friends who would have followed them.

“ In the same proportion as the increase of british population has been prevented, has the agricultural and commercial prosperity of the country been retarded and obstructed; as it is to the enterprise, intelligence, and persevering industry of that population, that both agriculture and commerce must be principally indebted for their advancement. On this head it may be fairly advanced that, had