

CANADA.

**Despatch from the Right Hon. Earl Grey,
Secretary of State.**

No. 1.

(No. 365.)

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COPY of a DESPATCH from Earl GREY to Governor-General the Right Hon.
the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE.

MY LORD,

Downing-street, May 18, 1849.

For Lord Elgin's
Despatch April 30,
1849, *vide* Papers
relative to the Affairs
of Canada, presented
to Parliament by Her
Majesty's Command,
May, 1849, page 3.

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen, your Lordship's Despatch of the 30th of April, giving an account of the scenes by which the city of Montreal has been disgraced, and in the course of which the building occupied by the Provincial Parliament has been destroyed by fire.

I am commanded by Her Majesty, to inform your Lordship that while she has received with very great concern, the intelligence of these deplorable events, they have not impaired the confidence which Her Majesty has hitherto felt in your ability and judgment, and that she continues to regard your administration of the affairs of the province, as meriting her entire approbation.

Upon the Act of the Provincial Parliament, which has afforded a pretext for the outrages which have been committed, it is the duty of Her Majesty's servants to reserve their judgment until we shall be in possession of the full information which you lead me to expect as to its character and objects; but whatever may be the view which may be taken of the merits of that measure, there can be but one opinion as to the guilt of those who in resistance to a law constitutionally passed by the Provincial Legislature, have had recourse to violence of so disgraceful a character, or as to the very serious responsibility incurred by all who have, even by the imprudence of their language, assisted in producing the excitement which has led to such lamentable results. Her Majesty's servants entirely concur with your Lordship, as to the consequences which must follow from submitting to the kind of dictation by which it has been attempted on this occasion to overrule the decision of the legally constituted authorities of the province, and they confidently rely upon your firmness, supported, as I trust you will be, by the Parliament, and the great majority of the people of Canada, to enforce for the future obedience to the law, and to compel those who may disapprove of the measures either of the Legislative or of the Executive Government of the province, to confine their opposition within legal and constitutional limits.

I appreciate the motives which have induced your Lordship to offer the suggestion with which your Despatch concludes, but I should most earnestly deprecate the change it contemplates in the government of Canada. Your Lordship's relinquishment of that office, which under any circumstances, would be a most serious loss to Her Majesty's service, and to the province, could not fail, in the present state of affairs, to be most injurious to the public welfare, from the encouragement which it would give to those who have been concerned in the violent and illegal opposition which has been offered to your government. I also feel no doubt that when the present excitement shall have subsided, you will succeed in regaining that position of "dignified neutrality," becoming your office, which, as you justly observe, it has hitherto been your study to maintain, and from which even those who are at present most opposed to you, will, on reflection, perceive that you have been driven, by no fault on your part, but by their own unreasoning violence.

Relying, therefore, upon your devotion to the interests of Canada, I feel assured that you will not be induced by the unfortunate occurrences which have taken place, to retire from the high office which the Queen has been pleased to entrust to you, and which, from the value she puts upon your past services, it is Her Majesty's anxious wish that you should retain.

The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine,
&c.

&c.

&c.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) GREY.