

constitution of the legislative council was a matter of serious deliberation. The committee reported that one of the most important subjects to which their enquiries had been directed was the state of the legislative council in both the Canadas, and the manner in which those assemblies had answered the purposes for which they were instituted. The committee strongly recommended that a more independent character should be given to those bodies, that the majority of their members should not consist of persons holding offices at the pleasure of the crown, and that any other measures that might tend to connect more intimately that branch of the constitution with the interests of the Colonies would be attended with the greatest advantage. With respect to the judges, with the exception only of the chief justice, whose presence on particular occasions, might be necessary, the committee entertained no doubt that they had better not be involved in the political business of the house. An examination of the constitution of the body at that period and the present, will sufficiently show in what spirit his Majesty's government have laboured to accomplish the wishes of parliament. The house of assembly state correctly that it has often been avowed that the people of Canada should see nothing in the institutions of neighbouring countries to which they should look with envy. I have yet to learn that his Majesty's subjects in Canada entertain such sentiments at present, or that they desire to copy in a monarchical government all the institutions of a republic, or to have the mockery of an executive absolutely dependent for its existence upon a popular body, usurping the whole authority of the State. I am not prepared to advise his Majesty to recommend to parliament so serious a step as the repeal of the act of 1791, whereby the institutions of this country were conferred separately upon the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.—Serious as are the difficulties by which your lordship's administration is beset, they are yet not such as to induce me to despair of the practical working of the British constitution; but should events unhappily force upon parliament the exercise of its supreme authority to compose the internal dissensions of the colonies, it would be my object, and my duty as a servant of the crown, to submit to parliament such modification of the charter of the Canadas, as should tend, not to the introduction of institutions inconsistent with monarchical government, but to maintaining and strengthening the connection with the mother country, by a close adherence to the spirit of the British constitution, and by preserving in their proper place, and within their due limits, the mutual rights and privileges of all classes of his Majesty's subjects." ¹

LXXXIII

THE NINETY-TWO RESOLUTIONS OF 1834 ²

[Trans.: *Blue Books relating to Canada*, vol. VI, 1836.]

Resolutions of the House of Assembly of *Lower Canada*, dated Quebec, Friday, 21 February, 1834.

1. Resolved, *That* His Majesty's loyal subjects, the people of this province of Lower Canada, have shown the strongest attachment to the British Empire, of which they are a portion; that they have repeatedly defended it with courage in time of war; that at the period which preceded the Independence of the late British Colonies on this continent, they resisted the appeal ³ made to them by those colonies to join their confederation.

2. Resolved, *That* the people of this province have at all times manifested their confidence in His Majesty's Government, even under circumstances of the greatest difficulty, and when the government of the province has been admin-

¹ This dispatch was severely criticized in 'The Ninety-Two Resolutions' (No. LXXXIII), and was expunged from the journals of the house.

² These resolutions were introduced by Elzéar Bédard, first mayor of Quebec. They were first embodied in an address to the governor-general, lord Aylmer, and then forwarded to England, where their subject matter was debated in the house of commons at the instance of J. A. Roebuck, M.P. for Bath, who had been agent in England for Lower Canada since 1833. Their historical interest is largely due to the fact that they mark the parting of the ways among the 'reformers' in Lower Canada, and that they led to the formation of the constitutional societies of Montreal and Quebec. They are printed here in full, as they illustrate better than any other document the matured attitude of Papineau and his followers, and distinguish them from the moderate and constitutional radicals, led by John Neilson.

³ See No. XXXIII.