

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THE name of the individual who forms the subject of this brief memoir, has for many years been before the public, and is now familiar with all men's tongues. It will not, therefore, be uninteresting to the American public, to learn a few particulars of one who, by his devotion to American principles, has made himself at once dreaded by the British government, and beloved by the great mass of the people of the Canadas, where he has been, for over a quarter of a century, the steady, unpurchased and unpurchaseable champion of democracy.

LOUIS JOSEPH PAPINEAU, speaker of the house of assembly of Lower Canada, was born in the city of Montreal, in October 1789. The family had originally emigrated into Canada, towards the end of the seventeenth century, from the village of Montigny, near Bourdeaux, in the south of France.

Mr. Papineau's father, Joseph Papineau, was a notary. He is a gentleman of great respectability, and when in public life, was the most influential member of the house of assembly, in which body, he sat from the commencement of the Constitution in 1791 to 1810, or 1811. Though still in the full possession of all his faculties at the advanced age of 86, he has for many years retired into private life. This venerable patriarch is the father of the Canada constitution. To his exertions, during a series of years, previous to 1790, is that country indebted for the representative form of government, which the British parliament is now about to destroy. In his youth, he found his country abandoned to a military despotism; his countrymen without any political existence in their native land, and their lives and property at the mercy of every stranger, whom chance or patronage may have drifted on their shores. He exerted himself to procure for them that rank in the body politic, which their numbers and wealth entitled them to. He procured for them some political power, by obtaining for them the right of choosing representatives

in a colonial assembly. He has lived to see those rights destroyed, and his fellow citizens again driven back, to suffer under that despotism from which he had succeeded about half a century ago in rescuing them. In the words of Grattan, the celebrated Irish patriot, he may truly say, "I have watched by the cradle of my country, and now I follow her hearse!"

The subject of the present brief biographical sketch, was sent at an early age to Quebec to be educated at the seminary under the superintendence of the catholic clergy of that city. In the 17th century an extensive and highly respectable college was established in the city of Quebec, by the Jesuits, where the youth of the colony were educated. When Great Britain got possession of Canada, one of its first steps "for the encouragement of learning," was to expel the Jesuits, and convert this college into a *Barrack*, (to which however it still continues to be put.) The clergy were therefore obliged to raise a building for the education of the rising generation, and to this establishment Mr. Papineau was sent, to go through his studies. Here he remained until he was 17 years of age. His collegiate course being completed, he entered on the study of the law, and was called to the bar about the year 1811-12. He had however been previously elected in the year 1809, and whilst still a student at law, to represent the county of Kent, (now the county of Chambly,) after a hard contest, in which he was opposed by all the strength of the then government party. This county he represented during two parliaments, after which he went in for the west ward of Montreal, for which place he has been uninterruptedly elected for the last 20 years.

Mr. Papineau went into the assembly on the influence of his father's reputation, as an honorable and acute representative; but he soon carved out a reputation for himself. The contest be-