

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE papers and correspondence in this volume, relating to the constitution and government of Lower Canada, and other public matters therein, throw upon certain periods of its history much additional light, the more interesting as coming directly from the chief actors themselves in the political drama. A notion has long and very generally prevailed, though without any positive evidence to support it, that the authorities in Lower Canada, particularly during the administration of Sir James Craig, had urgently moved the home government for an alteration in the constitution, and for various innovations upon its civil and religious institutions, but in which of these, or in what particular respects, remained a mystery to the people who were to be affected by the proposed alterations, and without being at all consulted on the subject. Here, however, is a full revelation of the whole scheme.

The correspondence of Mr. Ryland, the object of whose mission to England, in 1810, the reader will find in Sir J. H. Craig's letter to Lord Liverpool, introduced at the end of the publisher's, vol. 5, of "Lower Canada," is by far the most interesting portion of the collection, and will be found to have been conducted by that gentleman with tact and ability, whatever may be thought of the purposes of his mission, which few of the present day, except those of the old school, will undertake to justify, or approve.