

of lands and mortgages, so necessary for security in commercial transactions; no Insolvent Debtors Act; and your Petitioners have looked in vain for a law to provide for the unrepresented state of the townships, a fertile and valuable portion of this province, settled by Inhabitants of British origin; of these legislative enactments, and many others necessary to quicken the enterprise and industry of a commercial country, your Petitioners entertain little hope, until a re-union of the provinces shall have weakened the influence which has hitherto prevented their adoption in our statute book. The existence of this influence your Petitioners chiefly attribute to the impolitic division of these provinces; which, instead of rendering it the interest, as it is the duty, of every individual of the community to concur in measures to assimilate the whole population and to allay the jealousies naturally existing between the several classes, has unavoidably presented to the individuals who first attained a majority in the Legislature a temptation to perpetuate their own power by adopting a course directly opposite. To the same influence may be traced the small encouragement which has been held out to the settlement of the vacant lands of this Lower Province by British population, and consequently that upwards of 80,000 souls; (a number equal to one-fourth of the actual French population) who since the last American war have emigrated to this province from Great Britain and Ireland, scarcely one-twentieth part remain within its limits.

Your Petitioners have observed with gratitude the disposition which your Majesty's Government has evinced by the Act of the present year of your Majesty, c. 119, to apply a remedy to the existing political evils of these provinces, but it is their humble opinion that the provisions thereof are insufficient; that numerous circumstances concur to render vain any attempt permanently to regulate to the satisfaction of both provinces the division of the revenue collected at the port of Quebec, unless united under one legislature; and further they humbly beg leave to express their fears, that some of the provisions of this Act, although dictated by the necessity of regulating the conflicting claims of the two provinces, may afford a pretext to others for imputing to the Imperial Parliament a disposition remote from the intentions and views of your Majesty's Government.

Having thus stated the evils under which they have suffered, your Petitioners feeling the fullest confidence in the justice and wisdom of your Majesty's Government, and being satisfied that the subject will receive the most serious and deliberate consideration, would have felt much hesitation in presuming to suggest remedies; but as the re-union of the two provinces has been proposed in the Imperial Parliament, they beg leave to express their entire acquiescence in the adoption of that measure, upon such principles as shall secure to all classes of your Majesty's subjects in these provinces their just rights, and protect the whole in the enjoyment of existing laws, and their religion as guaranteed; such a union would, in the opinion of your Petitioners, afford the most effectual remedy for existing evils, as it would tend gradually to assimilate the whole population in opinions, habits and feeling, and afford a reasonable hope that the wisdom of the United Legislature would devise a system of government of more consistency and unity, and of greater liberality to all classes than has hitherto been experienced.

A union, on the equitable principles humbly suggested by your Majesty's Petitioners, will necessarily include a representation proportionate, as near as possible, to the numbers, wealth, and resources of the different classes of inhabitants of these provinces—will require no innovation in the laws or religion of the country, nor proscription in debate or motion in the Legislature, of the language of any portion of the inhabitants, in every class of whom bravery and loyalty have been evinced as fellow soldiers in defence of the provinces.

May it therefore graciously please your Majesty, that a bill for the union of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, on the equitable terms prayed for by your Petitioners, do pass into law, and the constitution established thereby be preserved inviolate to your Petitioners and their posterity.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will every pray.

Quebec, December, 1822.

Colonial Department, Downing-street,
7 June 1828.

Appendix, N° 18.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The PETITION of the undersigned Merchants and others connected with the Canadas.

Humbly sheweth,

THAT your Petitioners have perceived with alarm and deep regret the dissensions which have for many years prevailed in these provinces, and which are now so much matter of public notoriety, that your Petitioners deem it unnecessary to occupy the time of your Honourable House in their detail neither is it the purpose of your Petitioners to blame the conduct of any man or party of men in these provinces, and thus by recrimination aggravate the evil, but your Petitioners are actuated by the more laudable motive of calling the attention

569.

N° 17.

Petition from the
Inhabitants of
Quebec.

N° 18.

Petition of Mer-
chants and others
connected with the
Canadas, dated
17th May 1828.