

nothing could cause more alarm and grief in their minds, than the apprehension that there was a design on the part of Your Majesty's Government to establish, as a part of the State, one or more Church or denomination of Christians in this Province with rights and endowments not granted to Your Majesty's Subjects in general of other denominations, who are equally conscientious and deserving, and equally loyal and attached to Your Majesty's Royal Person and Government. In following honestly the dictates of their conscience as regards the great and important subject of Religion, the latter have never been conscious that they have violated any law or any obligation of a good Subject, or done any thing to forfeit Your Majesty's favour and protection, or to exclude themselves from a participation in the rights and privileges enjoyed by Your Majesty's other Subjects.

We humbly beg leave to assure Your Majesty that the insinuations, in the Letter, against the Methodist Preachers in this Province, do much injustice to a body of pious and deserving men, who justly enjoy the confidence and are the spiritual instructors of a large portion of Your Majesty's Subjects in this Province. We are convinced that the tendency of their influence and instruction is not hostile to our institutions, but, on the contrary, is eminently favourable to religion and morality; that their labours are calculated to make their people better men and better Subjects, and have already produced in this Province the happiest effects.

While we fully and gratefully appreciate Your Majesty's gracious intentions in granting a Royal Charter for the establishment of an University in this Province, we would beg most respectfully to represent, that, as the great body of Your Majesty's Subjects in this Province are not members of the Church of England, they have seen with grief that the Charter contains provisions which are calculated to render the institution subservient to the particular interests of that Church, and to exclude from its offices and honours all who do not belong to it. In consequence of these provisions, its benefits will be confined to a favoured few; while others of Your Majesty's subjects, far more numerous, and equally loyal and deserving of Your Majesty's paternal care and favour, will be shut out from a participation in them. Having a tendency to build up one particular Church to the prejudice of others, it will naturally be an object of jealousy and disgust. Its influence as a seminary of learning, will upon these accounts be limited and partial. We therefore humbly beg that Your Majesty will be pleased to listen to the wishes of Your Majesty's People in this respect, and to cause the present Charter to be cancelled, and one granted free from the objections to which, emboldened by a conviction of Your Majesty's paternal and gracious feelings to Your loyal Subjects in this Province, as well as by a sense of duty to the People, and a knowledge of their anxiety upon the subject, we have presumed to advert.

We would also beg leave to state, that it is the general desire of Your Majesty's Subjects in this Province that the Monies arising from the sale of any of the Lands set apart in this Province for the support and maintenance of a Protestant Clergy, should be entirely appropriated to purposes of education and internal improvement; we would most humbly represent, that to apply them to the benefit of one or two Christian denominations, to the exclusion of others, would be unjust as well as impolitic, and that it might perhaps be found impracticable to divide them among all. We have no reason to fear that the cause of Religion would suffer materially from not giving a public support to its Ministers, and from leaving them to be supported by the liberality of their people.

Many Works for the internal improvement of the Province, of great importance to its prosperity and to the ease and comfort of Your Majesty's subjects, are necessarily neglected for the want of money in the Provincial Treasury; for, although the Taxes are only of a trifling amount, yet, from the scarcity of money, and the want of even a tolerable price for the productions of their farms, they are paid with great difficulty by many of Your Majesty's people; it is impossible, therefore, to raise by taxation the means necessary to undertake and carry on these Works. It is also most desirable that a larger Sum than is at present at our disposal, should be employed to extend through the country the advantages of Education.

We therefore humbly pray, That the Monies arising from the sale of the Lands set apart in this Province for the support and maintenance of a Protestant Clergy, may be placed at the disposal of the Legislature of this Province, for the purposes we have mentioned.

(signed) *John Willson*, Speaker.

Commons House of Assembly,
20th March 1828.