

FIRST REPORT

OF THE CANADA COMMISSIONERS.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the *Lower Canada* Commissioners to Lord *Glenelg*.

My Lord,

Quebec, 30 Jan. 1836.

ON the same day on which we transmit to your Lordship a Report to which one of our body has been able to give only a qualified assent, we think it due both to your Lordship and ourselves, in this unanimous communication, to assure you that we are satisfied that every deliberation and inquiry has been conducted with fairness; and that whatever want of unity may exist in our views, is attributable to an honest difference of judgment, and not to any cause that should disturb the harmony with which our duties in this province ought to be discharged.

We enclose extracts of such parts of the minutes of our proceedings as relate to the differences of opinion which have arisen in respect to this Report.

We have, &c.

(signed)

The Lord *Glenelg*,
&c. &c. &c.

Gosford,
Chas. Edw. Grey,
Geo. Gipps.

FIRST REPORT.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIP,

Quebec, 23 Jan. 1836.

1. WE the undersigned Commissioners for the Investigation of Grievances affecting His Majesty's subjects of Lower Canada, in what relates to the administration of the government thereof, have the honour of making to your Lordship our first Report.

2. We understand that your Lordship has already been informed by the Governor-in-chief of the reason which retarded the meeting of the Provincial Legislature until the 27th of October. Your Lordship is also aware that in the address delivered on that occasion, his Excellency remarked that he had come into the province not merely as its Governor, but also as the head of a Commission, of which he described the general scope and objects. This statement appears to have given rise to some debate in both houses of the legislature, on the supposition that they were called upon to enter into some sort of formal relation with the Commission. It was argued that the Governor was the only authority with whom the Council or Assembly could communicate, and that to take notice of any other might compromise their rights and dignities; and the consequence of this reasoning was, that in the answer to the speech from the Throne, the Commission was not referred to at all by the Assembly, and by the Legislative Council was only alluded to in a very general and indistinct manner. The opinion thus acted upon appears no more than consistent with the views of His Majesty's Government. We never understood it to be wished that the Commissioners should be competent to hold any direct intercourse with the Legislature; and even should they, for some reason which we cannot anticipate, desire to make any communication to either House, such communication could be made by the Governor, while the real and main object of their employment would remain as it is now, merely to prosecute certain inquiries, and to report the results to His Majesty's Government. For this purpose the course adopted by the Council and Assembly does not offer to us any obstacle. Several members of each legislative body have evinced their readiness to afford the Commissioners any information in their power; and we believe that it was only in their public capacity, from a tenderness for the privileges of the bodies to which they belong, that they exercised a caution which does not at all interfere with the satisfactory discharge of our duties.

3. We have thought it right to say thus much in explanation of a circumstance of which, at a distance, the importance might be exaggerated, or the true intention and effect misunderstood. We would now request your Lordship's attention