

all respects, the counterpart of the assembly, inasmuch as that would virtually embrace the whole constituency of the country.

Having maturely considered, we trust without improper bias, the nature of the alterations in the constitution, proposed by the assembly, we intreat your Majesty duly to weigh the opinion which we now humbly submit, as to the fatal consequences which may be expected to result from such a change. Its more immediate effects would be to render all offices in the colony elective—to unsettle the minds of your Majesty's subjects of British origin respecting the security of life and property, which they now enjoy—to prevent their further increase through emigration and to sever the ties which bind the colony to the parent state; while its ultimate result would bring into collision the people of Upper and Lower Canada and drench the country with blood, for it is our solemn conviction that the inhabitants of Upper Canada will never quietly permit the interposition of a French republic between them and the ocean.¹

When the leaders of the assembly, in the year 1831, first openly declared themselves against the constitution, they found means of inducing a member of this house to proceed to England, for the sole avowed purpose of supporting the petitions of the assembly to your Majesty, and they have since, from year to year, procured the prolongation of his mission. We humbly submit that the representation made by this gentleman to your Majesty's government, ought to be received with extreme caution, because the legislative council have never assented to the mission—have never had official communication of any instructions given to him, or of despatches from him—and he has committed a gross breach of the constitutional rights of the house, by receiving a large annual salary from the assembly, knowing the same to be without the sanction of law, paid to him out of the public money, advanced upon the simple votes of that house for defraying its ordinary contingent expenses.

Upon all these circumstances, the legislative council earnestly beseech your Majesty to take into your most serious consideration, the present alarming posture of affairs in your Majesty's once happy province of Lower Canada—to be graciously pleased to adopt such measures, as in your wisdom will tend to tranquillize the minds, to maintain the constitutional rights and liberties of all your Majesty's subjects therein, and thus guarantee the permanence of the existing connexion between the colony and the parent state.

LXXXII

AYLMER TO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF LOWER CANADA

[Trans.: Christie, *op. cit.*]

Castle of St. Lewis,
14th Jan., 1834.

The governor in chief communicates to the house of assembly, for its information, an extract from a despatch addressed to him by the secretary of state for the colonial department, in answer to the petition of the house addressed to the king,² which by desire of the house, was transmitted to the secretary of state during the last session, for the purpose of being laid at the foot of the throne:—

“I have also laid before the king, the addresses of the house of assembly. I cannot pass over this document without observation. The object of this address is to pray his Majesty to sanction a national convention of the people of Canada, for the purpose of superseding the legislative authorities, and taking into their consideration in which of two modes the constitution of Lower Canada shall be altogether destroyed.—Whether by the introduction of the elective principle or by the entire abolition of the legislative council. On the mode proposed, his Majesty is willing to put no harsher construction than that of extreme inconsiderateness: to the object sought to be obtained, his Majesty can never be advised to assent, as deeming it inconsistent with the very existence of monarchical institutions. To every measure which may secure the independence and raise the character of the legislative council, his Majesty will be most ready to assent. In 1828, a committee³ of the house of commons carefully investigated the grievances alleged by the inhabitants of the Canadas, and amongst them the

¹ This section of the petition received a rebuke from England in a dispatch from lord Goderich. See Christie, iii, 490.

² See No. LXXX.

³ See No. LXXVI.