

That Your Majesty's Royal predecessors placed the languages spoken by the two great classes of Your Majesty's subjects in this province on the same footing, affording, in this respect, equal justice and equal facility to all.

That this principle was never departed from until the Act re-uniting these provinces was passed.

That we do not question that the best intentions and designs influenced the minds of those who enacted the provision which declared,—

“That all writs, proclamations, instruments for summoning and calling together the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of the province of Canada, and for proroguing and dissolving the same, and all writs of summons and election, and all writs and public instruments whatever relating to the said Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, or either of them, and all returns to such writs and instruments, and all journals and entries, and written or printed proceedings of what nature soever of the said Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, and of each of them respectively, and all written or printed proceedings and reports of Committees of the said Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly respectively, shall be in the English language only.”

But that in the very first Session of the Legislature, under that Act, it was indispensable to translate into French every public record and document. That the debates were not, and could not, unless a portion of the representatives of the people were silenced, be carried on without its use; that in Courts and judicial proceedings it was found equally necessary as before the union, and for every other practical purpose it is as much used as it ever has been.

That the only distinction which exists, then, is, that the French is not permitted to be the legal language of Parliamentary records,—a distinction of little value, perhaps, in itself, one which cannot produce any beneficial result on the feelings or habits of the people using it, while it gives rise to a feeling among them injurious to the peace and tranquillity of the province, namely, that this limited proscription of their language conveys, however undesignedly, an imputation of unfavourable distinction towards themselves.

That, desirous that the hearts of all men in this province may be joined in unity in their attachment to, and support of, Your Majesty's Person and Government, we humbly pray Your Majesty to endeavour to remove this cause of discontent, and to recommend to the Imperial Parliament the repeal of that portion of the law which has given rise to it, assuring Your Majesty that such a course will be hailed by Your Majesty's loyal Canadian people as an additional mark of Your Majesty's solicitude for their welfare.

Attest, CHARLES DE LÉRY, *Clerk Assistant,*  
*Legislative Council.*

(Private.)

No. 4.

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COPY of a DESPATCH from EARL CATHCART, K.C.B., to LORD STANLEY.

Government House, Montreal, December 19, 1845.

(Received January 16, 1846.)

MY LORD,

I conceive it to be my duty to intimate to your Lordship, that a member of the Executive Council of this province has applied to me to lay before that body your Lordship's communication marked Private of the 19th of May last to Lord Metcalfe, relating to the Address of last session from the Local Legislature to the Crown, praying for the repeal of that clause of the Act of Reunion of Upper and Lower Canada, which enjoins the exclusive use of the English language in the Legislative Records of the Provincial Parliament.

It would seem that Lord Metcalfe considered it right to communicate privately to the Executive Council the sentiments entertained by your Lordship upon this important, and, to the French Canadian Councillors especially, interesting subject; but that Lord Metcalfe did not officially lay before the Council your Lordship's letter, it being of a private and confidential character; for the same reason I have declined to comply with the request that has been preferred.

It is not probable that your Lordship will overlook this question; but it appears to me to be proper to inform you that the Executive Council are of opinion that it would be very desirable if the Governor General were authorized by your Lordship to communicate on the opening of the approaching session of the Provincial Parliament, a favourable reply to the Address, and I therefore venture to solicit your Lordship's early consideration of the subject.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. Lord Stanley,  
&c. &c.

(Signed) CATHCART.