

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 18

without any Road whatsoever, and the water communication exceedingly tedious, precarious, and during the Winter Season absolutely impassable : Crimes will be committed with Impunity, from the difficulty of Prosecutions ; and Civil Remedies in effect rendered burthensome from the same causes.

The Inhabitants of this Territory, already amounting to several Thousands, conceive with all Humility that they have the strongest Grounds to hope for such an exempt Jurisdiction as they ask for ; They were born British Subjects, and have ever been accustomed to the Government and Laws of England. It was to restore that Government, and to be restored to those Laws, for which from Husbandmen they became Soldiers, animated with the Hope, even in the most gloomy Aspect of Public Affairs, that should they fail in their Attempts to recover their former Habitations by a Restoration of Your Majesty's Government, they would still find a Resource in some Parts of the British Dominions, where they might enjoy the Blessings of British Laws and of the British Government ; and they still possess the greatest Confidence, that by Your Majesty's Gracious Interposition they will be exempted from the Burthens of French Tenures, which, however congenial they may be to Men born and bred under them, would be in the highest Degree exceptionable to Englishmen.

The Petitioners have the more Confidence in the Success of their Application, from reflecting that they do not ask for more than has already been granted to their Fellow Sufferers in Nova Scotia, for less indeed than is enjoyed by those who are settled in the Province of New Brunswick, and only to be in the same situation with the Settlers in the Island of Cape Breton : A distinction between men under the same circumstances of Prescription, Confiscation, and Attainder, and who had been invited into the Public Service, and to take Part in the Royal Cause, by the same assurances of Protection, and the same Gracious Offers of Rewards, in the one case continuing to Settlers the Blessings of the British Constitution, and in the other subjecting them to the Hardships of French Tenures and French Laws, they trust will not be permitted by a Gracious Sovereign, who is the Father of all His People.

In consideration of the vast extent of this Territory, along an important and valuable Communication, which is not only the Channel of the Fur Trade, but the Residence of those Nations of Indians who took part in Support of the Royal Cause, the Security, growth, and extension of these Settlements, must evidently be an object of the utmost Consequence, not only as it will most essentially secure and promote that Trade, but as it will preserve those Indians in their adherence to Your Majesty.

The United States are duly impressed with this Idea, and have already manifested a purpose of supplanting us in the Friendship of the Indians ; and unless they are counteracted, the British Interest with those Nations will very rapidly decline. We humbly presume that effectually to counteract them nothing would be so conducive as the Establishment of a liberal System of Tenure, Law, and Government in this new Settlement ; this