

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 18

(Translation)

TO THE KING

The true Glory of a Victorious King consists in assuring to the vanquished the same happiness and the same tranquillity in their Religion and in the possession of their property that they enjoyed before their defeat. We have enjoyed this Tranquillity even during the War, and it has increased since the establishment of Peace. Would that thus it had been secured to us! Deeply attached to our religion, we have sworn at the foot of the altar, unalterable fidelity to Your Majesty. From it we have never swerved and we swear anew that we never will swerve therefrom, although we should be in the future as unfortunate as we have been Happy: but how could we even be unhappy after those tokens of paternal affection by which Your Majesty has given us the assurance that we shall never be disturbed in the Practice of our Religion.

It has seemed to us indeed from the manner in which Justice has been administered among us up to the present time, that it was His Majesty's Intention that the Customs of our Fathers should be adhered to, so that what was done before the Conquest of Canada should be adhered to in the future in so far as it was not opposed to the Laws of England, and to the public good.

Mr. Murray, who was appointed Governor of the Province of Quebec to the satisfaction of all its inhabitants, has up to the present time, at the head of a Military Council administered to us all the justice that we could have expected from the most enlightened jurists. This could hardly have been otherwise, Disinterestedness and Equity being the basis of their decisions.

For four years we enjoyed the greatest tranquillity. By what sudden stroke has it been taken away through the action of four or five jurists, whose character we respect, but who do not understand our language, and who expect us, as soon as they have spoken, to comprehend legal constructions which they have not yet explained, but to which we should always be ready to submit, as soon as we become acquainted with them, but how can we know them, if they are not delivered to us in our own tongue?

It follows, that we have seen with grief our fellow citizens imprisoned without being heard, and this at considerable expense ruinous alike to debtor and creditor; we have seen all the family affairs, which before were settled at slight expense, obstructed by individuals wishing to make them profitable to themselves, who know neither our language nor our customs and to whom it is only possible to speak, with guineas in one's hand.

We hope to prove to your Majesty with all due submission the statements which we have the honour to lay before him.

Our Governor, at the Head of his Council, has issued an ordinance for the Establishment of Courts, by which we were rejoiced to see, that