

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty,

WE, Your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Lower Canada, assembled in provincial Parliament, deeply impressed with the necessity of the concordance and harmony that ought to prevail between the several branches of the legislature of the province, for promoting the happiness, the welfare and the good government of its inhabitants, have taken into mature consideration the circumstances connected with the constitution and composition of the Legislative Council of this province, as established by the Act of the Parliament of Great Britain, in the 31st year of the reign of your late Royal Father, our august sovereign of blessed memory, have considered it as our duty towards Your Majesty, as the supreme head of the British Empire, and paternal chief of the people who compose it, towards ourselves, as representing one of the most loyal of those people, and towards the general interests of the empire—

Most respectfully to represent,

That the Legislative Council of this province has not at any period of its existence given proofs of that spirit of independence, and community of interests with the inhabitants of the country, which could alone ensure that harmony in the proceedings of the Government, and give in particular to each of its branches that degree of confidence of public opinion, which is requisite to produce that effect.

That it could not be otherwise when it is considered that the original constitution of that body, and its renovation, in proportion as vacancies occurred, has been at the disposal of the Crown, at the recommendation of the Provincial Administrations, most frequently interested in surrounding themselves in that second branch by public functionaries, or by other individuals known to be advocates of the measures of the Executive, and who became thus clothed with a legislative inviolability. No bounds were given to those appointments, and they were thus made in great majority from amongst those who were the least connected with the country, either in point of permanent interest, of services rendered to their fellow citizens, or of the esteem in which they were held. Hence the whole body became isolated from the people, none of the great interests of whom it represents.

That the existence of this evil, which has for a long time formed the subject of the remonstrances of the inhabitants of this country, has induced us to search after a remedy, so that the Provincial Government might be re-constituted upon bases which may at the same time coincide with those imitations of the Metropolitan Government, which it was evidently the intention of its Legislators to introduce in the Canadas, and at the same time present that practical analogy, the results of which were, no doubt, not less their desire to introduce, and without which an apparent imitation in forms alone would only produce a still greater anomaly.

Although we have no hesitation in stating our opinions as to the means of remedying this constitutional defect in our Government, as forming the basis of our humble representations to Your Majesty; and although we do consider that all the interests of the country are fully and equally represented in the third branch of the Legislature, yet those to whom a defective system of Government has given an unconstitutional preponderance, might make a handle of it to cause the expression of our opinion not to be looked upon as that of the population in general, and by the operation of the same system, the representations of interested public functionaries and of privileged persons in the colony might reach Your Majesty's Government, carrying the same weight as those of Representatives freely elected by the whole people. This danger, added to the wide local distance, might cause measures, adopted in the United Kingdom with the best intentions, but without practical and local knowledge, to be discordant with the true interests of the province, and even to hurt those interests in essential points.

We therefore presume humbly to represent, that in case Your Majesty should be convinced of the difficulties that have been exposed, there would be the certain means of preventing them by placing the people of the country in general in a situation to express their opinion, and to recommend proper modifications, through delegates freely and indiscriminately chosen for that purpose by all classes, and out of all classes of the community, so as to be in harmony with the interests of the province and with those of Your Majesty's Government, which cannot be separated from each other. Such a body, constituted in virtue of an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom, to whom they would have afterwards to make a report of their labours, would, whilst it could be no disparagement to the supreme authority of the empire, be in unison with numerous examples in the free institutions of this continent; with respect to which, it has often been declared, that England desired to leave nothing to be wished for by the inhabitants of these colonies.

A general assembly of that kind would prove to be a faithful interpreter of all the interests of the Colony taken collectively, including those which it was the intention to be caused to be represented by the Legislative Council, and those which that body claim to represent. Those interests would in effect possess therein all their weight, and all their legitimate influence. Unless, indeed, whilst the executive branch of the Colonial Government represents the interests of the Metropolitan State, there ought to be also another constituted branch out of the country, and compounded of elements without any affinity with the varied interests and feelings of those who inhabit it.