

tending to effect improvements of this nature, calculated to strengthen the connexion subsisting between Great Britain and Lower Canada, by the promotion of the welfare and the interests of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in the Province.

At the time the summons was issued for assembling you on this day, I had every reason to believe that it would have been in my power to announce to you, as effected, those alterations which, you may gather from the resolutions of which I have spoken, it is intended to effect in the composition of the Executive and Legislative Council; but the interruption occasioned by the demise of His late Majesty to the progress of public business in the Imperial Parliament, and to the prospect of its early dissolution, have prevented the Ministers of the Crown from at once perfecting the measures they have in contemplation. These measures, therefore, are not forsaken, but only unavoidably suspended for a season; and I trust, I shall at no very distant period be enabled to appeal to the changes introduced into the two Councils, as well as to other salutary arrangements, as a proof of the sincerity with which Her Majesty's Government are disposed to carry into effect the intentions they have expressed on these points.

Since the end of the last session several local Acts have expired, and I would suggest for your consideration the expediency of renewing such of them as may have proved useful. I would moreover, especially invite your attention to the Acts relating to the District of Saint Francis, the duration of which is limited to the end of the session of the Provincial Parliament next after the first of May last.

The severe distress which in consequence of the partial or total failure of the crops, was experienced during the last winter in several parts of the Province, induced me, upon the urgent representations I received on the subject, and in order to avoid the approaches of famine, to grant out of the public funds, that succour which the means of the suffering inhabitants were inadequate to afford. Nor did I hesitate in the pressing emergency of the case to assume this responsibility, encouraged by the liberality you have displayed on similar occasions. In granting, however, such assistance, security was in each case taken for the repayment of the money so advanced, in the event of your declining to sanction the transaction. These advances amount in the whole, to about £5500, for which, as well as the sums I have issued for the preservation of the public works on the Champlain Canal, and for the maintenance of the Quarantine establishment, I trust you will see no objection to grant an indemnity. Such of the documents and vouchers connected with these several disbursements as are not already before you, shall be submitted to you with as little delay as possible.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I shall repeat my determination to adhere to those principles which I laid down for my guidance when I first addressed you—They are calculated, I conscientiously believe, to promote the real interests of the country, and to secure to all classes of Her Majesty's Canadian subjects those rights, privileges, and liberties which the spirit of the Constitution was intended to impart, and which every friend to that Constitution is bound to support and maintain.

Castle of Saint-Lewis,
Quebec, August 18th, 1837 }

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, AUGUST 22.

The House went into Committee on the State of the Province and on His Excellency's Speech; and after some time spent therein, the following draught of an address, in answer to His Excellency's Speech was read and adopted.

To His Excellency the Right Honorable Archibald, Earl of Gosford, Baron Worthington of Beccles, in the County of Suffolk, Captain General and Governor in Chief, in and over the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, Vice Admiral of the same, and one of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Counsellors

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Lower Canada in Provincial Parliament assembled, hereby thank your Excellency for your Speech from the Throne at the opening of the present Session.—We assure your Excellency that at whatever season we may be called upon to perform the duties entrusted to us by the people of the province, no personal inconvenience will prevent our labouring, as at our first and most important occupation, to ensure the liberties and happiness of our fellow subjects,—to remove the evils which have pressed, and still continue in a more aggravated form to press upon them, and to protect them against the system which has corrupted the Provincial Government, and has been sufficiently powerful not only to cause the mother Country to refuse all justice to the People with regard to their demands and ours for the im-

provement of their political institutions, and for the reform of all abuses, but to urge on those high metropolitan authorities from whom we looked for justice and protection: to acts of violence, to a violation of the most sacred and best established rights of the Canadian people and of their Legislature, and to the destruction of the very foundation of the Government. We are then, bound by our duty, frankly to declare to your Excellency, under the solemn circumstances in which we are placed, and after calm and full deliberation, that since the time when we were last called to meet in Provincial Parliament, we have seen in the conduct and proceedings of the Metropolitan Government, and of the Colonial Administration towards the country, nothing which could recreate in the people, the confidence and affection which the long experience of the past had destroyed; but that, on the contrary, every recent event has tended to efface what remained of these feelings, and to consolidate, in opposition to the liberties, interests and wishes of the people, the Colonial oligarchy factiously combined against them, and the hitherto unbridled and uncontrolled sway of the Colonial Minister in Downing street.

The avowal which it has pleased your Excellency to make to us, that the disposition of the authorities and of Parliament, with regard to us, and the oppressive and unconstitutional measures which have been the result, are the consequences of the recommendations made by certain pretended authorities known by the name of the Royal Commissioners has convinced us of the correctness of the opinions we have heretofore expressed with regard to this Commission—which, constituted and acting under no law, and without regard to law, and bound beforehand by its instructions to the partial views and narrow politics of the British Ministry in the Government of the Colonies, could not possibly co-operate in doing justice to the inhabitants of this Province, and in establishing their institutions, their liberties and their prospects for the future, on the solid bases of their wishes and their wants, as well as on the principles of the constitution.—We were therefore in no wise astonished at discovering in the productions of this pretended Commission nothing but injurious opinions, prejudicial at variance with its mission and its duty, ideas of government founded on suppositions utterly foreign to the country, or at fanning tomenting divisions and national distinctions, forgetful of constitutional principles, calumniating the provincial representation, and practising deception towards this house and towards the people. We are bound especially to notice in the Reports in question one essential and paramount contradiction which pervades every part of them, and forms their essence. It is, that while they admit the reality of the greater portion of the abuses and grievances of which we have complained, the Commissioners do not recommend their removal and the destruction of the causes which have produced them, but an act of aggression against this house which had denounced them, and the virtual destruction of the representative government in this Province, by the illegal and violent spoliation of the public monies of the people, by the Ministers or by the Parliament; when as it was the duty of the Commission and of the Mother Country, to assist this House in the entire removal of these evils, and in rendering their recurrence impossible, by re-constructing the second branch of the Legislature by means of the elective principle,—by repealing all laws and privileges unjustly obtained, and by ensuring the exercise of the powers and legitimate control of this House over the internal affairs of the Province and over all matters relative to its territory and the wants of its inhabitants, and more especially over the public revenue raised therein.

These remarks will render unnecessary, a portion of those which we might have been led to make on the series of Resolutions spoken of by your Excellency, and which being proposed by Lord John Russell, one of the Ministers of the Crown, were adopted by the two Houses of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. We perceive in this measure on the one hand, a formal and total refusal of the reforms and improvements demanded by this house and the people, and on the other, an abuse of the powers of Parliament, for the purpose of destroying the laws and constitution of this Province by force, violating with regard to us, the most sacred and solemn engagements—and of thereby establishing irremediably on the ruins of our liberties, and in place of the legitimate, efficient and constitutional control of which this house—and the people through it, have a right to exercise over all the branches of the Executive Government; corruption and intrigue, the pillage of the revenue, and the self-appropriation of the best resources of the country by the Colonial functionaries and their dependants, the domination and ascendancy of the few, and the oppression and servitude of the mass of the inhabitants of this Province, without distinction of class or of origin.

We ought therefore, to have courage to tell the Mother Country, that if she carries the spirit of these resolutions into effect in the Government of British America and of this Province in particular, her supremacy therein will no longer depend upon the feelings of affection, of duty and of natural interest which would best assure it, but on physical and material force, an element dangerous to the governing party, at the same time that it subjects the governed to a degree of uncertainty as to their future existence and their dearest interests, which is scarcely felt under the most despotic governments of civilized Europe. And we had humbly believed it impossible that this state of permanent jeopardy, of hatred and of division, could be wittingly perpetrated by England on the American continent; and that the liberty and welfare of every portion of the Empire, were too dear to the independent body of the English people, to allow them to prefer maintaining, in favor of the functionaries accused by the people of this Province, the system which has hitherto been its bane.

If, even before the opening of the present session we had been undecieved in this fond hope by public report, if we had little expectation that a sudden change in the councils of the Empire should place us at once in possession of the benefits of the constitutive reforms which we have declared to be essential, and such as would alone be sufficient, it was still natural that we should most anxiously look forward to our being called together in Parliament, because it was to be supposed at least, that most important reforms had been effected in the administration of the Government, and that others were speedily to follow them: We have learned with fresh regret from your Excellency's speech, that no such reforms have been effected, or will be at any near and determined period; notwithstanding the so often repeated pledges of the government. Your Excellency has been pleased to allude distinctly to the improvement of the personal composition of the Legislative and Executive Councils of this Province.—With regard to the Executive Council, we shall here forbear any painful reflections on the unmodified existence of that body, after it had been so solemnly repudiated by your Excellency in the name of the Crown, and on its co-operation with the other portions of the Provincial Executive in a system of anticipated coercion to effect the overthrow of the laws and constitution, of incriminations, persecutions, and arbitrary removals from office, directed against the mass of the people who remain faithful to the true principles of the British Constitution, and who have manifested their attachment to those liberties which have been attacked. We further represent, that the present Executive having, instead of performing its promises of justice, and the removal of abuses and grievances, entered upon the dangerous and slippery path which has been the ruin of preceding administrations, and having utterly alienated from it the affection of an important portion of those of her Majesty's subjects most devoted to the liberty and welfare of the country, in order to bestow its confidence and that of the Government, partially and on those only who supported it, no longer possesses in the person of its chief, or in those of its other members, the capability of effecting the reforms indispensably necessary as preliminaries to an arrangement between the government of the mother country and the colony, in a just, equitable, and impartial manner, adapted to satisfy this House and the people, and more especially to ensure between the several branches of the Legislature that co-operation and that uniformity of general views which we persist in believing to be absolutely requisite. We should have hoped that as a pledge of the