

"I shall neither avoid, nor rest upon, any party; but after attentively listening to all opinions, I will, to the best of my judgment, do what I think honest and right; firmly believing that the stability of the Throne, the interests of this Province, and the confidence of the People, can now only be secured by such a course."

To the Speakers of both Houses, as well as to many intelligent individuals with whom I conversed, I declared my sincere determination to do justice to the people of this Province. It was however with deep regret I observed, that from the House of Assembly I did not immediately obtain the assistance I expected in carrying the Instructions of His Majesty's Government into effect; for I received various Addresses requesting papers and information which I feared might excite troublesome and by-gone discussion.

On the 5th of February I received an Address of this nature, to which, in as conciliatory a tone as possible, I replied at considerable length; and being now determined to urge, and, if possible, to lead the House of Assembly on towards Reform, I concluded my Reply in the following words:

"The Lieutenant Governor takes this opportunity of appealing to the liberality and good sense of the House of Assembly for consideration, that as a stranger to this Province, totally unconnected with the political differences which have existed in the Mother Country, he has lately arrived here entrusted by our most gracious Sovereign with Instructions, the undisguised object of which is, firmly to maintain the happy Constitution of this Country inviolate, but to correct cautiously, yet effectually, all real grievances."

"The House of Assembly is deeply interested in the importance and magnitude of the task he has to perform; and he is confident it will, on reflection, be of opinion, that the Lieutenant Governor of this Province had better look steadily forward to its future prosperity and improvement;—that he had better attract into Upper Canada the superabundant Capital and Population of the Mother Country by encouraging internal peace and tranquillity, than be observed occupying himself solely in reconsidering the occurrences of the past."

"The Lieutenant Governor does not assert that the latter occupation is totally useless, but he maintains that the former is by far the more useful, and that to attend to both is impossible."

This appeal did not produce the effect I had anticipated: but I received another Address from the House of Assembly in behalf of eight Indians of the Wyandot Tribe; and I had scarcely entered this new and questionable ground, when a counter-petition was forwarded by eleven members of the same Tribe, in which they spontaneously declared, "we have the fullest confidence in the justice and fatherly protection of our beloved Sovereign and his Representative the Lieutenant Governor."

Another new set of Grievances was now brought forward by the House of Assembly, in the form of an Address to the King on Trade and Commerce, which I immediately forwarded to His Majesty's Government, although the principal complaints in the Grievance Report still remained unnoticed and unredressed.

During these discussions I purposely refrained from having much communication with the old supporters of the Government; because I was desirous to shew those who termed themselves Reformers, that I continued, as I had arrived, unbiassed and unprejudiced; and desiring to give them a still further proof that I would go any reasonable length to give fair power to their party, I added three Gentlemen to the Executive Council, all of whom were avowed Reformers.

With the assistance of these Gentlemen—with His Majesty's Instructions before us—and with my own determination to do justice to the Inhabitants of this Country, I certainly considered that the triumph of the Reform which

had been solicited, was now about to be established, and that the grievances under which the people of this Province were said to labour, would consecutively be considered and redressed. But to my utter astonishment these Gentlemen, instead of assisting me in Reform, before they were a fortnight in my service, officially combined together in an unprecedented endeavour to assume the Responsibility I owed to the People of Upper Canada as well as to our Sovereign, and they concluded a formal document which they addressed to me on this subject, by a request that if I deemed such a course not wise or admissible, they, who had been sworn before me to secrecy, might be allowed to address the people! and I must own, that the instant this demand reached me, I was startled, and felt it quite impossible to assent to the introduction of new principles, which to my judgment appeared calculated to shake the fabric of the Constitution, and to lead to Revolution instead of Reform.

Without discussing the arguments of the Council, I will simply observe, that had I felt ever so much disposed to surrender to them my station of Lieutenant Governor and to act subserviently to their advice;—had I felt ever so willing obediently to dismiss from office whomsoever they should condemn, and to heap patronage and preferment upon whomsoever they might recommend;—had I felt it advisable to place the Crown Lands at their disposal, and to refer the petitions and personal applications of the Inhabitants of the remote Counties to their decision; I possessed neither power nor authority to do so.—In fact, I was no more able to divest myself of responsibility, than a criminal has power to divert from himself upon another, the sentence of the Law: and though, under the pretence of adhering to what is called "the image and transcript" of the British Constitution in this Province, it was declared that the Executive Council must be regarded as a Cabinet, I had no more power to invest that Body with the attributes of a Cabinet than I had power to create myself King of the Province—than I had power to convert the Legislative Council into an Hereditary Nobility—or than I had power to decree that this Colony of the British Empire should henceforward be a KINGDOM.

From total inability therefore, as well as from other reasons, I explained to my Council, in courteous language, that I could not accede to their views; and it being evidently necessary for the Public Service that we should separate, I felt it was for them rather than for me to retire. I received their resignations with regret; and, that I entertained no vindictive feelings, will be proved by the fact, that I immediately wrote to Lord Glenelg, begging His Lordship most earnestly not to dismiss from their offices any of these individuals on account of the embarrassment they had caused to me.

On the day the Council left me, I appointed in their stead four Gentlemen of high character, entitled by their integrity and abilities to my implicit confidence; and with their assistance I once again determined to carry promptly into effect those remedial measures of His Majesty's Government which had been solicited by the Grievance Report.

However, a new and unexpected embarrassment was now offered to me by the House of Assembly, who, to my astonishment, not only requested to be informed of the reasons, why my Executive Council had resigned, but who I have learned, actually suspended all business until my reply was received!

As the Lieutenant Governor of this Province is authorised by His Majesty, in case of death or resignation, to name, pro tempore, the individuals, he may think most proper to appoint to his Council, I might constitutionally and perhaps ought to have declined to submit to either branch of the Legislature, my reasons for exercising this prerogative;—but actuated by the earnest desire, which I had uniformly evinced, to comply with the wishes of the House of Assembly, I transmitted to them the correspondence they desired, with a conciliatory message which ended as follows: